

HISTORY OF GREECE

[499–404 B.C.]

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Preface

This short history of Greece is meant for the students preparing for the Degree Examinations in History of the different Indian Universities. Attempt has been made to treat the topics covered by this book in a lucid, concise yet connected form with varying degrees of emphasis according to their importance.

No originality is claimed in writing this book and I shall fail in my duty if I do not express my debt of gratitude to the accepted authorities on the subject, whom I have extensively drawn upon, as will be evident from the bibliography at the end.

No book is perhaps without scope for improvement, and in the case of this book there is likely to be much scope for that. No pain will be spared to effect improvement when the need for a revision will arise.

My thanks are due to Sri J. N. Sen, B.Sc. of M/s New Central Book Agency but for whose persevering pressure the book would not have been completed by now. My thanks also go to Prof. Kalyan Chaudhuri, M.A., who assisted me in various ways.

I shall deem my labour amply rewarded if this book is found useful by the students for whom it is meant.

Contents

	PAGES
PREFACE	xi
INTRODUCTION	1-16
A RETROSPECT	1
KINGDOM OF LYDIA: RELATIONS WITH GREECE AND THE GREEKS	5
RISE AND EXPANSION OF MEDIAN KINGDOM ...	7
RISE AND EXPANSION OF PERSIAN EMPIRE: FALL OF THE LYDIAN KINGDOM	9
DARIUS AND IONIA	13
Chapter 1	
THE IONIAN REVOLT	17-28
CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING TO THE REVOLT ...	17
COMPARATIVE STRENGTH AND WEAKNESS OF THE PAR- TIES ON THE EVE OF THE IONIAN REVOLT ...	23
RESULTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE IONIAN REVOLT	25
CAUSES OF THE FAILURE OF THE REVOLT ...	27
Chapter 2	
THE PERSIAN INVASIONS OF GREECE ...	29-43
SECOND AND THIRD EXPEDITIONS OF DARIUS ...	29
HERODOTUS' ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE OF MARATHON	34
IMPORTANCE OF THE BATTLE OF MARATHON ...	36
CAUSES OF ATHENIAN SUCCESS IN THE BATTLE OF MARATHON	37
MILTIADES	39
Chapter 3	
THE THERMOPYLAE: ARTEMISIUM: SALAMIS: PLATEA: MYCALE	44-71
MARCH OF XERXES	44
THE THERMOPYLAE	51

HISTORY OF GREECE

	PAGES
ARTEMISIUM 	55
SALAMIS 	56
PLATAEA 	61
MYCALE 	68
Chapter 4	
SPARTA AND ATHENS: PAUSANIAS AND THEMISTOCLES 	72-87
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ALLIES MANIFEST THEMSEL- VES 	72
WHY SPARTA FAILED TO BE AN IMPERIAL POWER: HER PETTY PROVINCIALISM 	73
ROLE OF ATHENS IN THE PERSIAN WAR ...	74
PAUSANIAS 	76
SPARTAN ATTEMPT AT FORMING A CONTINENTAL EMPIRE 	79
THEMISTOCLES 	81
ARISTIDES 	85
Chapter 5	
CONFEDERACY OF DELOS 	88-109
ORIGIN OF THE CONFEDERACY 	88
ORGANISATION OF THE CONFEDERACY 	89
ACTIVITIES OF THE CONFEDERACY OF DELOS ...	93
TRANSFORMATION OF THE CONFEDERACY OF DELOS INTO AN ATHENIAN EMPIRE 	97
ATHENIAN EMPIRE 	100
CIMON: HIS POLICY AND CONDEMNATION ...	102
Chapter 6	
ATHENIAN CONSTITUTION 	110-126
RETROSPECT 	110
ATHENIAN DEMOCRACY PUT TO TESTS 	117
COMPLETION OF ATHENIAN DEMOCRACY UNDER EPHIALTES AND PERICLES 	119

CONTENTS

	PAGES
Chapter 7	
ATHENS UNDER PERICLES ...	127-145
CHANGED ATHENIAN FOREIGN POLICY ...	127
PERICLES: PERICLEAN IMPERIALISM ...	137
Chapter 8	
PELOPONNESIAN WAR ...	146-176
CAUSES OF THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR ...	146
PERICLES' RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE WAR ...	155
TOWARDS HOSTILITIES ...	158
CORINTHIAN RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE WAR ...	160
STRENGTH OF THE RIVALS ...	164
PERICLEAN STRATEGY ...	171
Chapter 9	
ARCHIDAMIAN WAR (431-421 B.C.) ...	177-248
FROM THE FIRST INVASION OF ATTICA TILL THE DEATH OF PERICLES ...	177
FUNERAL ORATION BY PERICLES ...	178
SECOND YEAR OF THE WAR ...	185
PERICLES' LAST SPEECH ...	190
FOURTH YEAR OF THE WAR: REVOLT OF MITYLENE	202
FALL OF PLATAEA ...	207
REVOLT OF CORCYRA ...	208
ATHENIAN INTERVENTION IN SICILY ...	211
PYLOS AND SPHACTERIA ...	216
STRATEGICAL AND POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CAPTURE OF PYLOS AND SPHACTERIA ...	222
CLEON ...	225
NEW OFFENSIVE ...	231
THRACIAN CAMPAIGN ...	233
PEACE OF NICIAS, 421 B.C. ...	236
BRASIDAS ...	241
RISE OF THE DEMAGOGUES ...	246
Chapter 10	
SECOND PHASE OF THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR ...	249-260
ALLIANCE WITH ARGOS ...	249

	PAGES
Chapter 11	
ATHENIAN EXPEDITION TO SICILY ...	261–309
AFFAIRS OF SEGESTA AND SELINUS ...	261
SIEGE OF THE CITY OF SYRACUSE ...	266
RETREAT OF THE ATHENIANS ...	270
RESPONSIBILITY FOR SICILIAN CATASTROPHE ...	272
CONSEQUENCES OF SICILIAN DISASTER ...	276
THE OLIGARCHIC REVOLUTION IN ATHENS ...	278
NICIAS ...	282
ALCIBIADES ...	287
END OF THE WAR ...	292
PERSIA'S PART IN THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR: DOWN- FALL OF ATHENS ...	294
GRIEVANCES OF THE SUBJECT ALLIES OF ATHENS ...	300
CAUSES OF ATHENIAN DOWNFALL ...	303
LYSANDER ...	305
Chapter 12	
GREECE IN THE FIFTH CENTURY B.C. ...	310–347
ATHENIANS IN THE FIFTH CENTURY B.C. ...	310
ATHENIAN ECONOMY IN THE FIFTH CENTURY ...	312
GREEK PHILOSOPHY ...	317
SOCRATES ...	322
GREEK LITERATURE ...	327
SOPHOCLES ...	328
EURIPIDES ...	329
AESCHYLUS ...	330
ARISTOPHANES ...	331
HISTORY ...	334
HERODOTUS ...	334
THUCYDIDES ...	336
CONTRAST BETWEEN HERODOTUS AND THUCYDIDES ...	339
ATTIC DRAMA: A RESUME ...	342
COMEDIES ...	346
Chapter 13	
ART AND ARCHITECTURE OF PERICLEAN GREECE ...	348–356
CONTRIBUTION OF GREECE TO WORLD LITERATURE	354

CONTENTS

	PAGES
Chapter 14	
SUPPLEMENTARY TOPICS	357-376
SPARTAN INSTITUTIONS IN THE FIFTH CENTURY B.C.	357
SOCIETY	359
THE ARMY	360
CORCYRAEAN SPEECH IN THE ATHENIAN ASSEMBLY ...	360
CORINTHIAN SPEECH IN THE ATHENIAN ASSEMBLY ...	363
CORINTHIAN SPEECH IN THE LACEDAEMONIAN CON- GRESS	366
ATHENIAN ENVOY'S SPEECH AT THE LACEDAEMONIAN CONGRESS	368
SPEECH OF ARCHIDAMUS	369
SPEECH OF NICIAS IN THE ATHENIAN ASSEMBLY ...	370
ALCIBIADES' SPEECH IN REPLY TO THAT OF NICIAS ...	372
NICIAS' SECOND SPEECH IN DEFENCE OF HIS POLICY ...	374
HISTORICAL VALUE OF THE SPEECHES INTRODUCED BY THUCYDIDES	375
BIBLIOGRAPHY	377
INDEX	379

List of Maps	FACING PAGE
1. GREECE	16
2. ATTICA	71
3. SPARTA	81
4. GREEK COLONIES	97
5. ATHENIAN EMPIRE	105
6. COAST OF ASIA MINOR	209
7. PYLOS AND SPHACTERIA	222
8. EASTERN PELOPONNESE	241
9. SYRACUSE	272

Introduction

1/A Retrospect: The country which its children called *Hellas* and the Romans named as *Graecia* or Greece, lies on the south-east verge of Europe. The word *Hellas* did not, however, convey to the Greeks the notion of any homogeneous geographical entity with a determined boundary but denoted the *country of the Hellenese*, the children of Hellen from whom they traced their origin. The Romans called them *Greeks* which was derived from a small obscure group of Hellenese whom they chanced to meet first. Greece possesses a great range of coastline largely disproportionate to the extent of its surface which is considerably less than that of Portugal. In the total length of the coastline it exceeds the whole of Pyrenean peninsula. The gulf of Corinth almost separates it into two limbs, its southern part called Peloponnesus which projects into the Aegean Sea and is equidistant from both its neighbouring continents—Africa and Asia.

*Hellas and
the Hellenese*

The tiny peninsula designated by the name *Hellas* or *Greece* was inhabited by a people which, by common consent, was one of the most interesting of the antiquity. The Greeks were rather a race than a nation since they lacked political unity which is regarded as the very foundation of national existence. The Greeks who were divided into Ionians, Aeolians, Dorians and other smaller branches, sprung from a single stock. To be a Greek was to be born of Greek parents and to look upon all peoples who spoke any other tongue as *barbarians*, meaning people of an alien birth and alien genius. But no one knows whence the parent stock of the Greeks came. They were not the original inhabitants of the Greek peninsula, whom Prof. Bury likens to the Iberians of Spain and Gaul and Ligurians of Italy. From their traditions it is supposed that the Greeks from some unknown land

*Ionian,
Aeolian
or
Achaean
and
Dorian
Greeks*

(now supposed by some to be the north-western part of the Balkan peninsula) had migrated to Greece which was originally inhabited by a non-Hellenic people. The Greeks loved, almost worshipped their home, yet a major part of the population at some later date set up and lived in colonies as widely separated as Asia Minor, Italy, Spain, etc.

Greek—
Aryan
Language

The Greeks were of Aryan stock, their language proved, and Philologists observed, words in Greek language, which manifestly have the same meaning and root in different Aryan languages like Sanskrit, German, etc.

Mycenaean
Civilisation

The original inhabitants of Greece, whom the Greeks supplanted, built up the civilisation of the pre-Graecian age which has come to light due to the labours of the archaeologists who divide this civilisation into *Early Mycenaean Age* and *Later Mycenaean Age* (1600–1000 B.C.) with the island of Crete as centre. Arthur Evans describes the whole of the pre-historic culture of Crete from the Neolithic age till the coming of the Greek civilisation as *Minoan Civilisation* after the name of the Cretan king Minos. He notices three distinct epochs in this civilisation : *Early Minoan*, *Middle Minoan* and *Late Minoan*. According to William Ridgeway, a dark-skinned race called the *Pelasgians* had dwelt in Greece from a remote antiquity and held at all time, in spite of conquests, and remained a chief element in the population of all Greece whilst in Arcadia and Attica it had never been subjugated. To his mind, the *Mycenaean Civilisation* had its origin in the main land of Greece and thence spread to the isles of the Aegean, Crete, Egypt and the north of the Euxine (Black Sea).

Minoan
Civilisation

Heroic Age :
Homer's
The Iliad
and *The*
Odyssey

The mythical period of Greek history with its fables and numberless gods and goddesses, and heroes, extended from 1400 to 1200 B.C. which is known as the *Heroic Age* of Greek history. Homer's *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*—the two most celebrated Greek epics

are Greek legends no doubt but have some measure of historical foundation; but they cannot be accepted by students of today as historical narratives in the real sense of the term. From the earliest historic period of Greece the authorship of these two epics had been ascribed to a poet named *Homer* although doubts have been expressed by modern critics as to the reality of the poet. There can hardly be any doubt as to the great historical value of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, the former dealing with the *Trojan War* and the latter with the long wanderings of Odysseus on his return journey from the war. Paris, son of Priam, king of Troy had abused the hospitality of Menelaus King of Sparta by carrying off Helen Menelaus' wife with considerable treasure. Whether this was effected by fraud or open violence, we cannot say. The Greeks vowed revenge and the Greek chieftains under the authority and influence of Agamemnon king of Argos, brother of Menelaus, led the expedition against Troy. The city was sieged and Agamemnon triumphed over the Trojans through a stratagem, but it was a dear-bought, mournful triumph. Few of the princes and chieftains survived to partake of the glory of the triumph, only to find on their return home that the government had been seized by others. The *Odyssey* narrated the long return voyage of Odysseus from the field of Troy through many vicissitudes of fortune.

*Theme of the Iliad:
Trojan War*

*Theme of the Odyssey:
Wanderings on the return voyage of Odysseus*

That there is a wealth of historical information in Homer's the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* can hardly be doubted. A true picture of the conquering spirit, and the domestic as well as the public life of the Greeks during the *Heroic Age*, so called from the numberless heroes that lived at the time, is revealed from the two epics as also from the numberless legends narrating the exploits of Bellerophon, Perseus, Hercules, Jason, Theseus, etc. Agriculture and animal husbandry were the basis of the economic life, a casteless society was the most noteworthy characteristic of the social life, and a system of government which may be called aristocratic monarchy supported by the personal feelings and co-operative

Wealth of historical information in numberless legends

Social and economic life, System of Government

Knowledge opinions of all free men characterised their political life. Knowledge of geography, sciences of navigation and astronomy, of trade and commerce, art and architecture among the Greeks of the *Heroic Age*, deserves special mention.

1200-800 B.C.—period of transition
Sparta and Athens The period from 1200 to 800 B.C. of the history of Greece is generally regarded as the period of transition from legend to history. From the earliest period two peoples of Greece who seem to have been prominent were the Dorians and the Ionians. Of the former the leaders were the Spartans, and of the latter the Athenians. The two cities—Sparta and Athens were so preponderant that retrospectively viewed, the history of Greece comes to mean the history of these two city-states.

Expansion of Greek races over the Aegean The Dorians, although in the long run were of comparatively less importance than the Ionians, were to appear earlier on the stage of history. A dark period of about two centuries followed the *Heroic Age*, which was marked by the disappearance of the old civilisation and the expansion of the Greek races over the Aegean and the political change in the peninsula.

Displacement of races: Achææ, Dorians in Peloponnesus The southward pressure of the Illyrians caused a displacement of races. The Achææans, one of the Greek races, occupied the strip on the southern coast of the Gulf of Corinth, which came to be known as Achææa. The Dorians conquered the Peloponnesus, that is, Laconia, Argolia, Arcadia etc. (11th century B.C.) and later on, towards the end of the seventh century B.C. by two wars conquered Messenia. The Dorians of Sparta were also called *Lacedaemonians* and their land as *Lacedaemon*.

Ionians in Athens The Greeks of Athens were of Ionian race, who won the Pelasgian acropolis under their leader Cecrops from whom the later Athenians were fain to trace their origin. Athens was originally divided into a number of independent states, like her immediate neighbour

Boeotia. Our source of information about the union of Attica is almost nil. In after-times the Athenians believed that Theseus the hero—one of the early kings of Athens, was responsible for the unity of the country.

*Union of
Attica*

Lure of the sea, domestic strifes, meagre agricultural produce, prospects of maritime trade and the suitability of the venues led the Greeks to found colonies on the shores of Asia Minor, eastern Aegean, shores of Euxine (Black Sea), Italy, Spain and Sicily. In the eastern Aegean and the coast of Asia Minor, the Aeolians, Dorians and the Ionians had spread out in numerous colonies. The Ionian colonies were Samos, Miletus, Euphesus, Colophon, Teos, Clazomenae, Chios, Phoea, Cyzicus, Perinthus, Lampsachus, Abydos, Erythrae, Paros, Naxos, Mycronos, Tenos, Acanthus, Olynthus, Andros, Torone, Amphipolis, Thasos, Methone, Leontini, Rhegium, Messina, etc. The Dorian colonies were: Tarentum, Megara, Syracuse, Epidamnus, Corcyra, Casmenae, Selinus, Potidaea, Melos, Cnossus, Byzantium, Chalcedon, Helicarnassus, Cos, Cnidus, Heraclea, etc. The Aeolian (also called Achaean) colonies were: Cyme, Mytilene, Sestos, Methymna, Posidonia, Laos, Croton, Ternia, Temesa, Zacynthus, Locri, etc.

*Venues of
the Greek
colonies:
Asia Minor,
shores of
Black Sea,
Italy, Spain,
Sicily*

*Different
colonies*

2/Kingdom of Lydia : Relations with Greece and the Greeks : Kingdoms of Phrygia and Maeonia were the two inland countries of Asia Minor adjacent to the Greek colonies on the Asiatic coast. By the seventh century B.C. a brisk trade grew between the Greeks not only of the Asiatic coast but of the mainland of Greece and the Phrygians and Maeonians. Both the Phrygians and the Maeonians became cultural converts to the Greek music, Greek alphabet and soon began to honour Greek gods. The Greeks reciprocated by adopting Phrygian legends in Greek mythology. Midas, king of the Phrygians dedicated a throne to the Greek god Apollo of Delphi. Not long after, Lydian

*Kingdoms of
Phrygia and
Maeonia*

king Gyges sent gifts of six golden mixing-bowls to the God of Delphi.

*Maeonian
rule over
Lydia*

*Gyges—
first Lydian
king of
Lydia*

*Lydian
expansion
under Gyges*

The Phrygians had gradually won their way into Lydia and assumed political control which becomes all the more certain from Homer who referred to the Maeonians and made no mention of the Lydians. Prof. Bury observes that 'there can be no doubt this name represents the Phrygian settlers or conquerors.' Candaulus, the Maeonian king ruled over Lydia and set up a new dynasty. The Maeonians were an Aryan-speaking people and according to Greek tradition derived their origin from Hercules and called themselves *Heraclidae*. In 687 B.C. Gyges, (687–652 B.C.) a native Lydian usurped the throne of Lydia taking advantage of the degenerate condition of the *Heraclidae* dynasty. The new ruling dynasty is known as *Lydian* and no longer *Maeonian*. Gyges not only established his independence but succeeded in extending his power up to the shores of Propontis where he founded Dascylion, and conquered the Troad, with the design of making the Aegean his western boundary. He pushed down the valleys of Cayster, Hermus and Meander, and captured Colophon and Magnesia, but the 'other cities beat back the enemy'. His plan to conquer the Asiatic Greeks was rudely interrupted by the invasions of the Cimmerians from the regions round about Lake Maeotis on the northern coast of Black Sea wherefrom they were driven out by a Scythian tribe. As they came round by the eastern coast and when making incursions into western Asia Minor, enlisted people of Thrace as their allies. They occupied Sinope which was made their chief settlement and made the bold venture of attacking the Assyrian empire, then under Assarhaddon only to be completely routed (679 B.C.). But they succeeded in overthrowing the kingdom of Phrygia which was then under its last king Midas. They turned to Lydia next. Gyges in this sore state sought Assyrian help by offering to acknowledge the over-

lordship of Assurbanipal, then reigning at Nineveh (capital of Assyria). With Assyrian help Gyges defeated the Cimmerians and sent their chiefs in chains to Nineveh. But Gyges was not a man to brook Assyrian vassalage for long, he declared himself fully sovereign and after enlisting Ionians and Carian mercenaries sent them in assistance of Egypt to free her from Assyrian allegiance. It was about this time that he sent six golden mixing-bowls to Delphic God, already referred to. But soon the Cimmerian renewed their attack on Lydia and in the engagement that followed Gyges lost his life. His capital *Sardis* was taken except the citadel. Cimmerians then swooped upon the Greek cities of western Asia Minor. While Ephesus beat them back, the temple of Artemis outside the walls was burnt down by the Cimmerians. Magnesia was the next target of attack and it was destroyed. In the mean time Ardys succeeded Gyges, on the throne and dealt a severe blow to the Cimmerians and drove them out. Ardys succeeded in extending his power into Cappadocia as far as Halys.

*Gyges saves
Lydia
against the
inroads of the
Cimmerians
with Assyrian
help*

*Gyges loses
life in
defending
against
Cimmerians'
second attack*

*Ardys
succeeds
Gyges*

3/Rise and Expansion of Median Kingdom :

The mighty Assyrian empire was verging to its collapse in the seventh century B.C., the power that was destined to take its place had already arisen. Media, the land of the Medes lay east of Assyria and was included in the Assyrian empire. Towards the end of the eighth century the Medes threw off Assyrian yoke and made themselves independent. Deioces who led the rebels was elected king of Media by its people by a free vote. He also welded the people into a national unity and set the seal on the union of Media by building the city of Ecbatana. The successors of Deioces had to defend their independence by defeating repeated attempts at recovery by Assyria. With the accession of Phraortes (650-25 B.C.) the Median kingdom not only came to stay but acquired enough strength to extend its sway beyond its border. Phraortes conquered the hilly land of Persia towards south,

*Media takes
the place of
Assyria after
throwing off
Assyrian
yoke*

*Median
acquires
strength
under
Phraortes*

*Egypt and
Babylonia
throw off
Assyrian
yoke*

*Cyaxares
joins hands
with
Nabopolassar
of Baby-
lonia and
divides
Assyrian
Empire
with him*

*War bet-
ween Lydia
and Media*

*Matrimonial
relation
between
Lydia and
Media*

*Croesus—
a great king
of Lydia*

*Expansion
of Lydian
empire under
Croesus*

this gave rise to an empire extending 'from the Caspian to the Persian Gulf, east of Assyria and Babylonia'. Cyaxares, successor of Phraortes prepared for the conquest of Assyrian empire. He organised a vast Median army. In the meantime, Egypt and Babylonia had thrown off the Assyrian yoke. Cyaxares joined hands with Nabopolassar, the king of Babylonia, now independent of Assyria and defeated the Assyrian army and the Assyrian empire was divided between the two conquerors. Assyria itself and all lands stretching westward into Asia Minor were annexed to Media while the south-western portion up to the borders of Egypt went to Babylonia. Cyaxares also brought under his power the eastern part of Asia Minor as far as the bank of the Halys which became the boundary between Media and Lydia. In 585 war began between Media and Lydia but a solar eclipse on the day of the battle made an uncanny impression on both sides and a peace was concluded. Kingdom of Lydia got a lease of life.

The Lydian King Alyattes gave his daughter in marriage to Astyages who succeeded to the throne of Media. Retrospectively, when the Lydians had recovered from the invasion of the Cimmerians, King Ardys, successor of Gyges renewed the efforts of the conquest of the Greek cities on the western Asia Minor coast. Ardys' successors Sadyattes and Alyattes carried on a long desultory war with Mibtus and ultimately had to make peace, perhaps due to the outbreak of war with Media. Alyattes' son Croesus (560-546 B.C.) was a great warrior king. It was reserved for him to conquer the Ionian and the Aeolian cities of the western coast. He succeeded well in his task and one after another all Aeolian and Ionian cities except Miletus fell under him. Dorian states of Caria were also forced to submit, and the empire of Croesus extended from Halys to the Aegean. There was a reciprocal cultural influence on Lydians and the Greeks of Asia, that of the latter was, however,

much greater upon the former. At Sardis Greek gods were revered, Greek oracles appealed to Lydian kings were benefactors of Hellenic sanctuaries. The new temple of Artemis received lavish donations from king Croesus.* 'Golden offerings richer than even the priestly avarice of the Delphians could have dared to hope for' were made to Apollo of Delphi by King Croesus.

Greek influence on the Lydians

Croesus was already master of a kingdom that extended up to the coast of western Asia Minor, and now he mooted the idea of making Lydia a sea power and conquering the Greek islands in the eastern Aegean. For a king like Croesus, the plan was perfectly feasible but, events of great consequence that were happening in Media dissuaded him. Croesus' brother-in-law Astyages was dethroned by Cyrus (the Great) of the Persian family of Achaemenids. This meant nothing more than a change of dynasty since the Medians and the Persians were of the same race and religion. Croesus, on the plea of restoring his brother-in-law to the Persian throne decided to attack Persia, as the Median kingdom now came to be called after the seizure of power by Cyrus.

Aims of Croesus

Astyages of Media dethroned by Cyrus

Persian as the Median kingdom now came to be known was sought to be attacked by Croesus

4/Rise and Expansion of Persian Empire:
Fall of the Lydian Kingdom: The rise of the Persian Empire was no more than expansion of the Median kingdom under Cyrus, the Persian. Croesus king of Lydia wanted to strike at the formidable Persian King before he became enough strong, and to strike him first. At the head of an army that included a contingent from the Ionian Greeks, Croesus crossed the fateful Halys and invaded Cappadocia. But after some initial success he fought an indecisive battle with the host of Persians and Medes led by Cyrus. Being outnumbered by the soldiers of Cyrus, Croesus retired into Lydia. Cyrus advanced against Lydia and won a decisive victory on Croesus' army and after a short siege of Sardis the Lydian capital,

Croesus' plan to attack Persia—

Croesus retires to Lydia disappointed

Croesus invades Lydia—defeats Croesus whose life was spared

* See ante. p. 7.

it was captured and plundered (546 B.C.). Life of Croesus was, however, spared. Fall of Croesus meant the fall of the Lydian kingdom.

Contribution of Lydia to the development of the Greek civilisation

Greece stood exposed to the Persian gaze

Distance of the Persian capital from the Asiatic Greek states prevented spread of Greek influence on the Persians:

Persian Kings grew into Oriental despots

Conflict between the East and the West

Nature of the conflict

The kingdom of Lydia played an important part in the development of the Greek civilisation. Apart from the invention of coinage for which Lydia was responsible, and besides the influence of her luxury and the system of government known as *tyranny* exercised over Ionia, Lydia was an important bulwark against the great oriental empires. It kept Greece free from direct contacts with the Assyrian empire and 'for sixty years from coming into contact with the empire of Media'. When the bulwark was swept away, a new period of Greek history had opened. Greece now stood exposed to the gaze of the emperor of Persia whose dominion lay beyond the Tigris and Euphrates into lands yet unknown to the Greeks. The distance between the homes of the Asiatic Greeks and the capital of the Persian empire, the journey between the two ends being told by months and the fact that the emperor ruled his distant parts through Satraps made it difficult, rather impossible for the Asiatic Greeks to exercise any influence on the government. If the Persian capital were very near to the Greeks, the latter might have become the teachers of the Persians, but that having been not the case, the Persians were under the influences of the Semitic civilisations of Assyria and Babylonia and grew into typical oriental despots. Hence the struggle which the Greeks and the Persians were entering into for two centuries to follow was, although one between peoples of Aryan speeches, was in fact, a conflict between the East and the West, between Asia and Europe. While in the Middle Ages the opposing forces were of similar character 'fanaticism arrayed against fanaticism, numbers against numbers, strategy against strategy', the case was entirely different in the conflict between Persia and the Hellenic world. The East, i.e. Persia entering into the conflict with superiority of numbers,

of splendour and brilliance of equipments, the west, the Hellenic world presented an unimposing appearance with a handful of men called from widely scattered people but full of confidence and stubbornness, full of enthusiasm and confidence in their training and in their arms. It was a conflict between people relying on despotism considering men as instruments of the will of the emperor, and people who hated despotism, who possessed 'rare refinement of perception'. Despite weakness in number and lack of the brilliance of arms, the west won the day, for 'mind triumphs over matter, discipline over mere numbers, and life over routine'.

*Despotism
vs Refine-
ment*

In his campaign against Lydia, Cyrus had invited the Ionians who were in the army of Croesus but they refused, for they did not anticipate the debacle. Cyrus was annoyed at this refusal and did not forget it. When Sardis fell, Cyrus refused to accept the overtures of the Asiatic Greek cities of Ionia but signed a treaty only with Miletus which remained aloof from the contest and had never been subject to Lydia. Cyrus who had other projects in hand, committed the task of reduction of Ionia into the hands of his lieutenants whom he had left in Lydia. The Asiatic Greeks states, that is the Greeks of Ionia, had to prepare for their own defence, but they were under the curse of diversity which was disastrous. Disunited Asiatic Greeks naturally fell an easy prey to the Persians. Harpagus, the Persian general subdued them one after another, exacted tribute from them and placed on them the burden of serving in the Persian army. Their freedom of trade and commerce, however, was not interfered with.

*Cyrus'
campaign
against
Lydia—
Ionians'
refusal to
help*

*Fall of
Sardis—
Cyrus'
annoyance
with the
Ionians :
Treaty with
Miletus*

*Harpagus
left in charge
of the un-
finished task
of conquest*

The Ionians and the Aeolians, however, made one common effort for their defence. They sent an embassy to Lacedaemon, i.e. Sparta to appeal for help. "But the Spartans, whose horizon was bound by the Peloponnesus, did as little for them as they had done for Croesus." Sparta did as much as to send a ship to Ionia to study the condition of the country and

*Ionians and
Aeolians
made com-
mon effort at
defence*

*Appeal to
Sparta for
help—failed*

the power of Cyrus. One of the Spartan reconnoitres went up to Sardis and standing before the Persian king forbade him to work harm to any Greek community "since the Lacedaemonians will not permit it."

*Cyrus
against the
Scythians*

Cyrus himself, soon after the fall of Sardis 'departed into inner Asia to capture Babylonia and carry his arms as far as the Jaxartes, finally to fall in the battle of with the Scythians (Massgetae) near Aral sea. His general Harpagus whom he had left to complete his work in Ionia had little difficulty in reducing the Asiatic Greek cities.

*Harpagus
reduces
Ionian
Greeks of
Asia Minor*

*Persians
formed three
Satrapies
out of the
Asiatic
Greek states*

The Persians formed the conquered country into three satrapies, Ionia and all the coast-land of western Asia Minor formed the first Satrapy, the kingdom of Lydia the second—both under a single Satrap, i.e. Governor with his seat at Sardis. The third satrapy embraced Phrygia and the north-western territory with the seat of the satrap at Dascylium on the Propontis.

*Asiatic
Greek cities
were left
with their
municipal
independence
on payment
of tribute*

*Greek cities
became
fragments of
vast Persian
empire*

*Greek cities
under
Tyrants
supported by
the Persian
emperor*

*Absence of
community of
thought of
the Greeks
and the
Persians and*

Ostensibly the position of the Greek cities in western Asia Minor did not change, they were left with their municipal freedom, but paid tribute to the Persians as they had done to the Lydian kings before. The only difference was that now they had to furnish troops and ships to the Persians on demand, and the centre of gravity of the empire to which they now belonged lay at Susa a three months' journey, not at Sardis as before. This, however, made a great, real difference, for now the Greek cities became only fragments of a vast whole which was alien to them in race, religion and speech. Under Croesus, they were scarcely conscious of the difference between themselves and the Lydians. Subjection to Persia, politically meant the establishment in different city-states under men who set themselves above law and became tyrants and looked to Persia for support. It was this absence of the community of thought between the

Greeks and their new masters the Persians and this outraging of the Greek political ideals that led to the Ionian Revolt

*outraging
Greek political ideal—
real cause of
the Ionian
Revolt*

5/ **Darius and Ionia** : Cyrus died in 529 B.C. in the midst of his conquests and was succeeded by his son Cambyses who conquered Egypt. With a fleet provided by the Asiatic Greeks and the Phoenicians Cambyses reduced Cyprus, and the African cities of Barca and Cyrene. Thus within twenty years of the fall of Croesus, a third of the area inhabited by the Greeks had come under the Persian rule, and yet the impulse of expansion was far from being exhausted. Long absence of Cambyses from Persia gave occasion for trouble there. From Behistan rock inscription it is known that 'he was great in the land' and Cambyses' brother Bardes, or Smerdis, the second son of Cyrus, whom Cambyses caused to be murdered in order to avoid possible rivalry, was now personated by Gaumates. Cambyses, despairing of his throne died by his own hand in Syria. Gaumates, the usurper was slain by Darius, son of Hystarpes. Darius succeeded to the throne (529 B.C.) and married Atossa, the daughter of Cyrus, and widow of her brother Cambyses thus linking himself closely to the family of the predecessors. He then set himself to the task of reorganising his empire by dividing it into twenty *satrapies*. The old Lydian kingdom comprising three provinces was placed under two *satraps* or governors. The Ionian and Lydian provinces were placed under the satrap who resided in Sardis, the Phrygian province along with the Greek cities of the Propontis was placed under a satrap with his seat at Dascylon. The Satrap, however, did not interfere in the internal affairs of the Greek cities which were under despots who allowed to retain a large measure of autonomy. The despots might act as they pleased so long as they sent military contingents on the requisition of the Satraps and paid tributes regularly. As a matter of fact, the despots liked to be under Persian rule for it secured their power

*Cambyses
succeeds
Cyrus
(529 B.C.)*

*Gaumates
usurps
Persian
throne—
slain by
Darius
(529 B.C.)*

*Reorganisa-
tion of the
empire—
Lydia and
Ionia placed
under the
Satrap at
Sardis*

*Tyrants or
Despots'
interest in
remaining
under Per-
sian rule*

*Darius'
reforms*

*Construction
of Royal
Road*

*Knowledge
of Geography*

and this was the reason why the Greeks of Asia Minor made no attempt to shake off the rule of Darius even when there were troubles in the Persian empire in the initial years of Darius' reign. In one respect rule of Darius was a little worse than that of Cambyses, for while the latter had realised only irregular contributions from the Greek cities, Darius instituted the system of a fixed yearly tribute. But Darius had, however, compensated the Greeks by his monetary reforms, furtherance of their commerce and improvement of road system. A Royal Road that connected Susa and Sardis was divided into stages marked off by regular stations all through its distance of 1500 miles. A journey was told in three months. Darius' adoption of a bimetallic coinage was known in Greece as the *daric*. The construction of the Royal Road had widened the Greek ideas of geography and the end of the sixth century B.C. saw the rise of geographers in Ionia. The development of geography in Ionia was certainly furthered by the Royal Road and in this respect the Persian conquest of the Greeks in Asia Minor was an advantage to European civilisation.

*Darius'
plan of
expansion*

It took Darius eight years to set his house in order before he began to prepare for his European expedition. His original plan was no more than to expand his boundary up to the northern bank of the Danube by subduing Thrace, and also to extend his power westward over Macedonia. To subdue the warlike Thracian peoples living in a mountainous country was not an easy job. Darius, therefore, made careful preparations and organised a very large army which crossed the Bosphorus north of Byzantine by a bridge of boats thrown by Mandrocles, a Samian architect. Darius ordered two pillars to be set up on the European side of the Bosphorus, upon which he caused the names of the various peoples that composed his vast army. Historian Herodotus saw these pillars. The land forces were supplemented by a large fleet furnished by the Greek subjects of Persia which sailed

*Darius'
pillars*

along the Thracian coast, the Black Sea up to the mouth of the Danube. The Greek contingents were commanded by their despots, the most prominent of whom were Miltiades of Thracian Chersonesus, Histiaeus of Miletus and Hippoclus of Lampsacus. Details of the warfare leading to the subjugation of Thrace are lacking. But Darius found that the hostility of the Scythians—the tribes that dwelled between Carpathians and the Caucasus—might be a frequent trouble to Persian rule in Thrace. The Greek fleet sailed up to the mouth of the Danube and improvised a bridge over what Darius with his army marched into Scythia. But both the purpose and details of the Scythian expedition of Darius are shrouded in a mist of legends. But the Scythian expedition was an ignominious failure. Darius returned leaving behind his army under Megabazus to complete the conquest of Thrace and to reduce the Greeks along the northern coast of Propontis and the Aegean, who had revolted. Megabazus succeeded in his task and established Persian dominion actually as far as Strymon and even farther west. Macedonia also acknowledged allegiance to the Persian Emperor, Darius' expedition beyond the Danube failed to make any impression upon the Scythians and shortly afterwards they raided Thrace and drove out Miltiades from Chersonese.

Greek contingents in Darius' army

Darius' Scythian expedition a failure

Conquest of Thrace acknowledged of Persian supremacy by Macedonia

Darius had reasons to be particularly grateful to Histiaeus of Miletus. He had left the Tyrants (despots) of the Greek cities to guard the bridge of boats behind after crossing the Danube in his adventurous campaign against the Scythians. The most prominent of these tyrants according to Herodotus were Daphius of Abydos, Histiaeus of Miletus, Aristagoras of Cyzicus, Miltiades of Chersonese, Strattis of Chios, Hippoclus of Lampsacus, Aristagoras of Cyme. Some Scythians came up with the proposal that the Greeks should remove the bridge of boats so that Darius might be cut off and destroyed, and the Greeks would be free. Miltiades advocated compliance with the

Histiaeus saviour of Darius

Miltiades' plan—rejected at Histiaeus' instance

request of the Scythians but others on Histiaeus' suggestion, decided to remain loyal to the Persian emperor. But to give the Scythians a seeming satisfaction removed a portion of the bridge adjoining the Scythian bank. The Persians were saved, for the Scythians who were looking for them, could not contact them in the wide steppes, and the Persians reached the place where the bridge was thrown but could not see anything in the darkness of night. An Egyptian shouted the name of Histiaeus who heard him and restored the removed portion of the bridge of boats. This was certainly a good cause for Darius' gratitude to Histiaeus. If, however, the advice of Miltiades had been adopted the subsequent Persian invasion of Greece would perhaps have never taken place.

Darius' gratitude to Histiaeus

Histiaeus allowed to colonise Myrcinus—Megabazus' opposition

As a reward for his loyalty Histiaeus, on his own desire, received a place called Myrcinus on the lower course of the Strymon in Thrace where he built a fortress. Myrcinus was in the neighbourhood of silver mines and there was abundance of wood suitable for ship-building. But Megabazus, on whom Darius had left the task of completing his unfinished task in Thrace, etc., represented to the latter that permission granted to Histiaeus to found a colony at Myrcinus was an impolitic step and was beset with dangerous future consequences. Darius sent for Histiaeus and on the plea that he was a friend whose company was indispensable and ostensibly to do him honour of a seat in the royal court at Susa detained him there. Thus the schemes of Histiaeus were cut off and it was not before twelve years of regret in a foreign court that Histiaeus had any chance of resuming his connection with the Greek politics.

Histiaeus detained at the Persian court at Susa

Aristagoras—son-in-law of Histiaeus tyrant of Miletus

Ever since Histiaeus' departure from Miletus it was being governed by his son-in-law Aristagoras 'a man whose ability fell short of his ambition but famous in history as the originator of the revolt of the Ionian Greeks.'



facing page 16

CHAPTER 1

The Ionian Revolt

1/Circumstances leading to the Revolt: With the conquest of the parts of Thrace that still resisted, and the submission of Amyntas, king of Macedonia, general Magabazus whom Darius had left behind to complete the task he had begun himself, brought the first step towards the Persian conquest of Greece to an end.

*Magabazus
left to com-
plete the
conquest of
Thrace and
Macedonia.
by Darius*

Several years had passed in unbroken peace when a trivial matter threw all in disorder again and the initial step in the great conflict between the East and the West - the Persian empire and the Hellenic world, known as the Ionian Revolt, was taken.

Naxos, the largest of the Cyclades, was powerful at that time, ruling over several islands, possessing a considerable navy and a large army of hoplites. A popular insurrection there threw the aristocrats, the ruling party, into exile. The latter appealed for help to Aristagoras, son-in-law of Histiaeus, who was ruling Miletus since his father-in-law's detention in the Persian court. Aristagoras acceded readily seeing in it a chance of his own aggrandisement. But realising that his ambition was higher than his ability, for the power of Miletus was insufficient for the job, he wished to avail himself of the strength of Persia. He went up to Sardis and succeeded in interesting Artaphernes, the Persian satrap by unfolding the project of reducing the Cyclades, even the conquest of Euboea. Artaphernes readily accepted the proposal and obtained the consent of Darius and placed at Aristagoras' disposal a fleet of two hundred ships commanded by Megabates, a Persian. This was not what Aristagoras would like, for he had expected Persian help under his own command, and this cut through his plan. A quarrel

*Ionian Revolt
born of a
trivial matter*

*Aristagoras'
ambitions:
seeking of
help from
Artaphernes
of Sardis*

*Aristagoras
tyrant of
Miletus
for help*

broke out between Aristagoras and Megabates and despite every chance of success of the enterprise, it failed because Megabates in order to avenge a slight received during the quarrel sent information to forewarn the Naxians. The success of the expedition depended on secrecy, and this once destroyed, it was bound to fail. The Naxians forewarned of the approaching danger made effectual preparations to sustain long four months' siege of the city, after which the expedition returned. It is, however, not clear from Herodotus why a high-born Persian should have turned traitor to his country in order to gain an advantage in a petty quarrel with a Greek who was not certainly looked upon as anything but miserable by the Persian commander.

*Help given
but under
Megabates:
Expedition
fails*

*Aristagoras
afraid of
punishment
at Darius'
hand*

While the failure of the enterprise was fatal to the prospects of Aristagoras, he was naturally apprehensive of punishment at the hands of the Persian emperor for the loss of Persian prestige and money that the failure had entailed. Fear of punishment by way of expulsion from Miletus loomed large in his mind. He decided to retrieve his fortunes by inciting a revolt of the Asiatic Greeks against the Persian power. First thing he did after resolving to raise Ionia in revolt to free himself from his difficulties was to resign his power as the tyrant of Miletus. Here again Herodotus is not clear as to why Aristagoras who feared expulsion from his position as tyrant of Miletus should have chosen to lay down his power voluntarily. The secret perhaps lay in the Ionian discontent with Persian taxes and the rule of tyrants who served as the instruments of the Persian emperor left no other course open before Aristagoras than to lay down his power as an earnest of his sincerity as the leader of a movement of revolt against the Persian power. Hammond observes that Aristagoras saw in a revolt the means to continue his leadership of the Asiatic Greeks and, if necessary, carve out a domain elsewhere. It will be more plausible to suggest that Aristagoras sought

*Aristagoras
resigns
power—
his motive*

to distribute the wrath of the Persia emperor all over the Hellenic world if possible and thereby make the chance of success against possible Persian attack more feasible.

Aristagoras was confirmed in his resolution by the arrival of a slave sent by Histiacus from Susa upon whose head was tattooed a message from Histiaues himself urging a revolt in Ionia. Histiacus is said to have sent the message in the hope that in the event of a revolt in Ionia, the Persian emperor would send him to quell it, and thus he would secure his escape from the court at Susa.

*Story of
incitement by
Histiaues*

But the origin of the revolt certainly lay deeper. (i) There was a widespread discontent against the Persian rule, among the freedom-loving Greeks of Ionia. (ii) Persian taxes were burdensome and naturally hateful to the Greeks. (iii) 'The system of government by tyrants, which the Persians maintained in the Greek cities as they had found it at the time of the conquest, had outlived its usefulness and had come to be resented as a burden and a humiliation.' The tyrants of the Asiatic Greek states were the instruments of the Persian emperor whose support they expected to draw upon to maintain themselves in power. (iv) The failure of the Naxian expedition was a blow to Persian prestige as the Greeks saw it and the time was considered favourable for a general revolt, for the contingents of the Ionian states were assembled since the time of the Naxian expedition and much valuable time was gained thereby. (v) An economic crisis had gripped the Asiatic Greeks since the sixth century B.C., industry and commerce showed signs of decline. Conquest of Egypt by Cambyses dealt a blow to the trade that the Asiatic Greek cities had with Egypt. The destruction of the Italian city Sybaris, and such other political changes dealt a blow to the trade and commerce of the Asiatic Greek cities and this had its reaction on their politics. (vi) Lastly, there was a widespread hatred of despotic constitutions, which

*Origin of the
Ionian revolt*

smouldered in the cities, and despotic constitutions were a part of the Persian system. An ambitious despot like Aristagoras only called this feeling into action.

*Aristagoras
prepares for
leadership*

The initial step in promoting rebellion was the setting up of democracies in the Asiatic Greek states by driving out the tyrants. Aristagoras had himself resigned his position as tyrant in Miletus in order to win over the people, and Miletus had a free constitution. There were many tyrants on board the fleet that returned from Naxos; some of them were devoted to the Persian emperor. They were taken prisoners and handed over to the people of their respective cities. Except Coes, tyrant of Mytilene who was stoned to death by the people, the rest were allowed to escape and their cities turned into democracies without any bloodshed. Thus there was a freedom movement that preceded the greater movement against Persia.

*Search for
allies*

The next step was to obtain allies from Greece against the Persian power. Aristagoras went to Greece for this purpose and went to Sparta at first. There he appeared before the king Cleomenes with a brass tablet on which a map of land, sea and rivers was inscribed. Aristagoras represented that the slavery of the Ionian Greeks was a disgrace not only to the Asiatic Greeks but to all the Greeks and specially to the Spartans, the bravest of them all. He also claimed that the barbarians, i.e. the Persians could be easily conquered as they were neither brave nor well-armed. He also narrated the peoples dwelling the sea and the Persian capital of Susa where lay the treasures of the king as also the probable prize of victory. Cleomenes deferred his answer till the third day and then asked Aristogoras about the distance from Ionia to Susa. When Aristagoras unsuspectingly replied that the distance was to be told in three months, Cleomenes peremptorily ordered Aristagoras 'Begone from Sparta Milesian stranger before the Sun sets'. Aristagoras' attempt to win over the king by paying him fifty

*Sparta re-
fused to help*

talents—quite a fortune in the economic computation of the time, was frustrated by the eight- or nine-year old daughter of Cleomenes, who warned him that the stranger would corrupt him. The narrative shorn of its story-element perhaps means that the Spartan king was not convinced that the words of Aristagoras were any guarantee that assistance would be forthcoming from Asia.

Aristagoras, however, fared better in Athens and Eretria. Both these states sent succour. In Athens the Milesian was well-received for the Athenians were not on good terms with the Persians for the former tyrant Hippias was in favour with them. Further, the Ionians were colonists from Athens which was also on most intimate terms with Miletus. Athens despatched twenty ships and Eretrians who were old friends of Miletus and Athens, sent five. The campaign was then begun. Aristagoras marched his troops towards Sardis. The Persians had in the mean time laid siege of Miletus and one of the purposes of Aristagoras in marching straight against Sardis was to compel the Persians to withdraw the siege of Miletus. The Greeks under Aristagoras succeeded in taking Sardis but they did not occupy the citadel. While the Greeks were in Sardis a fire broke out and the city was burnt to ashes. They left the smouldering fire behind and returned to the coast where near Ephesus the Persian force met and defeated them in an engagement in which the Eretrian leader fell. The Athenians then gave up the whole affair and straightway returned home. With the return of the Athenians their part in the Ionian Revolt ended.

*Aristagoras
fared better
in Athens
and Eretria*

*Aristagoras'
march to-
wards Sardis*

*Burning of
Sardis*

*Defeat at
Persian hand*

*Athenians
returned
home*

Matters looked bad for Ionia and the country would have been lost if allies were not found to draw off the Persian troops from that quarter. The burning of Sardis was of great significance not so much for the course of the Ionian Revolt as much for what the revolt was to lead to. As to the revolt, the burning of Sardis was taken by Greeks and semi-barbarians to

*Significance
of the burn-
ing of Sardis*

be the time to throw off the Persian yoke. In the north Byzantium and some towns on Hellespont joined the revolt and in the south the Carian cities also followed suit. Even the important island of Cyprus revolted except the city of Amathus. The revolt against the Persians thus became general among the Asiatic Greeks as also among the semi-barbarians.

Darius' resolve to take revenge

Histiaeus sent to quell the revolt

When Darius received the news of the rebellion and the burning of Sardis, his wrath was great specially against the Athenians of whom he is said to have no prior knowledge. He ordered a slave to remind him of the Athenians at every meal time so that he would not forget to take vengeance on the Athenians. He sent for Histiaeus and told him what had happened and added that there was strong suspicion against him of having caused the revolt. Histiaeus replied that on the contrary the cause of the revolt was his absence for he could have prevented it. He promised that if the king would send him there, he would reduce the whole country to submission, and even make many new conquests including Sardinia--the El Dorado of that age. The king sent him after entrusting him with the desired mission.

Fortune turns favourable to Persia

End of Aristagoras and Histiaeus

Meanwhile matters had taken a course highly favourable for the Persians. Aristagoras despaired of success gave up the struggle and retired to Thrace where wandering as a freebooter for some time he was soon afterwards slain. Histiaeus came to Sardis only to find that he was deeply suspected by the satrap Artaphernes and feeling himself unsafe fled to Chios. There he sided with the rebels giving out that it was he who had instigated the revolt and perhaps it was then that he spread the story of the message tattooed on the head of a slave sent by him from Susa to Aristagoras. Afterwards he, like Aristagoras, took to the life of a freebooter plundering Aeolian mainland where he fell into the hands of Artaphernes who crucified him. His head was sent to Darius who, however, disapproved of his execution and had the head buried with due honours.

The Persians subdued the cities on the Hellespont, the Propontis and the Bosphorus. Byzantium and Chalcedon were deserted by their inhabitants. Artaphernes then organised the civil government of the reconquered districts giving, as Herodotus says, some very useful laws. He made a survey of the countries and determined the amount of tribute each should pay in light of the survey he made. Different communities of these countries were now found to submit their disputes to arbitration. Miletus was put under prolonged siege and the Ionian fleet was defeated by the Persians who now concentrated all their efforts to the fall of Miletus. The city was ultimately captured; the male inhabitants were all done to death, most of the women and children were transported to Susa. The city was then ransacked and the temple of Apollo at Didyusa was burnt down. The fall of Miletus marked the end of the revolt.

*Persian
success over
the rebels*

*Reorganisa-
tion of civil
government
by Arta-
phernes*

*Fall of
Miletus*

2/Comparative strength and weakness of the parties on the eve of the Ionian Revolt: Our information about the comparative strength and weakness of the revolted Ionian Greeks and the Persians is meagre. From the occasional and indirect references an estimate of the respective strength and weakness may however be made.

*Meagre
source*

Of the two antagonists in the Ionian revolt, 'the Greeks were unready and ill-organised while the Persians possessed most formidable army the world had yet seen.' This army was often in action and allowed seldom to rest, added efficiency to the number, due to practice. Such was the strength of the Persian army that Herodotus remarked that it was driven by a demon.

*Persian
army most
formidable*

Further, on the northern, eastern and southern sides the Persian empire had expanded to the farthest profitable limits. On the western side although conquest was not much profitable due to the deficiency of the material wealth of the Greek lands, yet these were within easy reach of the Persians.

*On western
border of
Persian
empire lay
the Greeks
and were
within easy
reach*

*Persian
strength
enhanced
due to
support of
Greek
renegades*

One point that added to the already invincible strength of the Persian King was the assistance and encouragement that he received from numerous Greek renegades who aspired after staging a comeback in Greece wherefrom they had either been expelled or fled, along with the Persian train.

*Greeks
weaker
on land*

*Naval
strength
good both
of offence
and defence*

*Hecataeus'
advice*

There was no question of the revolted Greeks' engaging the Persians on land. They put their trust on their navy. Here the Ionian Greeks were better off than the Persians. After all, a maritime people with a powerful navy relied on it naturally, as the surest shield against attack. But the navy was also their strongest weapon of offence. Historian Hecataeus warned the leaders of the revolt of the danger of the course they had decided upon and in case it was followed at all, they must obtain command of the sea at all costs, and should finance pose any problem the treasury of Apollo at Branchidae to be impounded for the upkeep of the fleet.

*Financial
weakness
of the
Greeks*

Aught we understand from Hecataeus' warning was that the Greeks were not financially sufficient and might have to depend on the treasury of Apollo. Further, since the end of the sixth century B.C. the Asiatic Greeks were passing through an economic crisis.

*Greeks
worse
off than the
Persians*

Thus whether considered from the strength of the Greek hoplites (armed men) or from the point of view of organisation, readiness or financial sufficiency the revolted Greeks were definitely worse off than the Persians.

*Muster of
naval
strength*

In the muster of the Greek fleet at island of Lade opposite Miletus, the Greek combined ships numbered 353 with 80 from Miletus, 12 from Priene, 70 from Lesbos, 60 from Samos, 17 from Teos, 100 from Chios, 3 from Myus, 8 from Erythrae, as against 600 Persian ships.

*Lack of
unity of
command
among the
Greeks*

But the greatest source of the Greek weakness was the lack of unity of command. The Ionian Greeks under pressure of the situation, revived the old

Confederacy of the Ionian cities and issued a uniform coinage which facilitated commercial intercourse as also provided money for the federal forces. But no steps were taken to establish any unity of command and the different contingents sent by different cities served under their respective generals. This divided command worked the weakness of the revolted Greeks.

*Revival
of the
confederacy
of the
Ionian cities;
uniform
coinage*

*Divided
command*

Further, the wisdom of extending the area of revolt was not recognized at the first stage, although later Aristagoras went out on Greek mainland for canvassing support. Had the support of the Greeks of the mainland been enlisted, the Greeks might have measured their swords favourably against the Persians and halted them and brought them to a standstill thereby removing the necessity of the Greeks to fight the Persians on their own soil.

*Extension
of the area
of revolt
not taken
in right
earnest*

3/Results and consequences of the Ionian Revolt: The Ionian revolt ending with the fall of Miletus had a profound influence on the subsequent history of Athens. True that during the revolt Miltiades the tyrant of Chersonese sided with the rebels and conquered for Athens where he came over from Chersonese, the isles of Lemnos and Imbros. Yet the Ionian revolt brought upon the Athenians and the Eretrians who sided with the rebels and participated in the burning of Sardis, the wrath of the Persian King. Although Athens had withdrawn from the revolt at an early stage, the fall of Miletus which ended the revolt naturally came as a great shock and disappointment to the Athenians. Apart from the sympathy for the Milesians with whom the Athenians were on good terms, the fall of Miletus and the suppression of the revolt naturally roused among the Athenians a feeling of fear of the probable punishment at the hands of the Persian emperor whom they had given cause of wrath.

*Failure of
Ionian revolt:
its conse-
quences*

*Perils of
Greece due
to Persian
emperor's
wrath*

Persian king Darius had ever since he came to know of the Athenian and Eretrian complicity in the

Persian king's decision to punish Athens

attack on Sardis, sternly resolved to measure out adequate punishment by way of revenge on these two countries. Athens and Eretria could certainly not escape without chastisement for the insult to the great king's pride. Further, Hippias the banished tyrant of Athens who found asylum at the Persian court also urged an expedition against the city that had thrown him out. The decision was to send an expedition against Athens straight across the Aegean.

Hippias the banished tyrant of Athens joins Darius

Mardonius sent to reassert Persian supremacy over Thrace and Macedonia

In the meantime steps were taken to reorganise the reconquered territories. Ionian cities were all surveyed and the amount of tribute to be paid by each was fixed on the results of the survey. All this was done by Artaphernes on Darius' instruction. Mardonius, son-in-law of the king was sent to reassert Persian supremacy over Thrace and Macedonia. The revolt taught the Persians that the system of tyrannies did not answer and an experiment in opposite policy was undertaken. Despotism was replaced by democratic governments. 'The world may well have been surprised, to see the great despotism of all favouring the institutions of democracy.'

Lessons learnt by the Greeks

The failure of the revolt had taught the Greeks the lessons that lack of unity and the want of adequate naval support were the causes of the failure of the Greeks against Persia. These were the two points that the European Greeks sought to achieve in their subsequent conflict with the Persians.

Ionian revolt ostensible cause of the Persian invasion of Greece

The Ionian revolt was indeed the ostensible cause of the Persian expedition against the mainland of Greece, but it lay in the logic of history that the Persian expansionism would not have left the European Greeks alone even if there were no Ionian revolt. The Ionian revolt only saved the mainland of Greece for a time and gave it adequate warning about the prospect of a Persian invasion.

In Ionia the revolt resulted in an economic depression, political despondency and a retardation of the

Greek art, culture, literature, industry and commerce. While the payment of tribute was insulting, the feeling of general despondency was damping to the creative geniuses for which Ionian Greeks were particularly noted in the seventh and the eighth centuries B.C.

*Depression:
economic,
political and
cultural*

4/Causes of the failure of the Revolt: The Ionian revolt failed because the European and the Asiatic Greeks did not combine. Sparta, the strongest military power did not come forward with the help it could render. Athens and Eretria, specially the former came to join the rebels out of a feeling of oneness with the Ionians, but she also had withdrawn at an early stage of the revolt.

*Lack of unity
of the Asia-
tic Greeks*

Personal aggrandisement, rather than national or general Greek interest was the root cause of the revolt. Aristagoras' appeal for help to Artaphernes was for assistance to subjugate the Cyclades. No great work could be achieved through essentially narrow or selfish motive made national or general under pressure of circumstances. Aristagoras' calling the sentiments of the Greeks against the Persians was motivated by self-interest, namely to retrieve his fortune with the Greek help.

*Personal
aggrandise-
ment rather
than general
interest
motive of the
revolt*

Another cause of the failure of the revolt was the lack of unity of command or of any ultimate goal. 'The want of unity and the absence of even a mediocre commander turned the scale in favour of the Persians'. Return from the burning of Sardis without occupying the city had all the disadvantages of a retreat from the battlefield. Taking of Sardis should have been the plan and once the defence of the city was surprised, the city should have been occupied. This would have boosted the morale of an invading army. Purposeless attack on Sardis followed by withdrawal to the coast placed the Greek army in the situation of a fleeing force and its defeat at the hands of the Persian force became easier. Further, it earned the wrath of Darius in the bargain.

*Lack of the
unity of
command*

*Lack of plan
and purpose*

*Weak
leadership
compared to
that of the
Persians*

The Ionian Greeks had not the kind of leadership that a revolt, in order that it may succeed, demands. Aristagoras was no match for a Magabazus, Artaphernes or Mardonius. He was too selfish to be a real leader whose skill and sacrifice can inspire confidence.

*Vastness of
the Persian
naval and
military
strength*

The most decisive cause was the vastness of the Persian strength naval and military whose sheer weight was crushing to the defences of Miletus or any country in Ionia. In personal bravery or military skill the Asiatic Greeks were not much inferior to the Persians, but it was the superiority of the number that decided the issue.

CHAPTER 2

The Persian Invasions of Greece

1/Second and Third expeditions of Darius:
Darius' first expedition against the Greeks of the mainland had resulted in the conquest of Thrace. Macedonia also acknowledged allegiance to the great king. The Ionian revolt served not only as an interlude but also as an additional cause for Persian expedition against the European Greeks.

First Persian expedition against European Greeks

Having suppressed the Ionian revolt Persia reconquered the Persian Europe, reorganised the political set up of the Asiatic Greek cities. The most important task, namely punishment of those free Greek states of the mainland which had made war on Persia, was now undertaken. It was decided to send an expedition straight across the Aegean sea. Cities on the Persian seaboard were called upon to equip warships and provide transport for the Greek cavalry. Heralds were sent to the Greek cities to furnish earth and water as tokens of submission. In most cases, prospect of a Persian invasion was terrifying and the required tokens were given to the heralds. Aegina, the enemy of Athens also furnished the tokens. In Sparta and Athens the Persian heralds were thrown into pits to collect water and earth for themselves, enough proof of their contempt to the proposal of the Persian king. The die was thus cast.

Persia prepares for the invasion

Heralds sent to Greek states: treatment of the heralds at Sparta and Athens

Darius placed his nephew Artaphernes and the Mede Datis in command of the new expedition. They were accompanied by the aged tyrant Hippias who was lured by the hope of once more ruling over his native county. The number of triremes composing the fleet is said to have been 600 strong. The fleet, according to Herodotus avoided after their previous experience, a journey round Mount Athos, but direct

Second Persian expedition: Artaphernes and Datis commanders of the expedition

Naxos taken

to the Cyclades. It first reached Naxos, the inhabitants whereof abandoned the city and fled into the hills. The Persians took the city, enslaved the inhabitants who yet remained there and burnt the city. The sacred island of Delos, the seat of the Sun God Apollo was scrupulously spared. The Persians then landed in Euboea and after reducing Carystus on the way, reached Eretria. According to Bury it was 'strange to find that Athens and Eretria had made no common preparation to meet a common danger. Eretria was severed from Attica only by a narrow water, and yet there was no joint action.'

Eretria delivered by treachery to the Persians

But from A. Holm we know that there were some Athenian auxiliaries there, who, however, withdrew on the advice of the Eretrians, so as not to be implicated in the inevitable fall of the city. Eretria held out for six days but it was delivered over to the invaders by the treachery of some leading burghers. The city was burnt down and the inhabitants reduced to slavery. 'The flames which consumed the temples of Eretria were a small set off against the flames of Sardis' according to Bury. The Persians now crossed over to Attica

Burning of Eretria

where, by the advice of Hippias who was accompanying them, they landed near Marathon where the country being level they hoped to use their cavalry to the best advantage. Further, it was by the side of the district in which the Peisistratids had long their adherents. Peisistratid Hippias belonging to the same house came to recover his lost dominion over Athens. But to come with a foreign host was the weakest argument of Hippias. Far from getting any help from the Athenians the bitterest enemy of the Peisistratids, namely Miltiades, son of Cimon who returned from Chersonese after the Ionian revolt and conquered the important islands of Lemnos and Imbros for Athens, stood up against the invaders. The Athenians were led by the Strategi, one of whom was Miltiades. He was the soul of the resistance which his country offered to the Persians although the nominal commander-in-chief of the army was the Polemarch Callimachus.

The Persians reach Marathon

Miltiades—soul of the Athenian resistance to the invaders

Had the Athenians remained under tyranny, it would have been easier for Hippias to recover Athens. But fortunately, under democratic institutions the Athenian character had developed in such a way that Athens would not allow its liberty to succumb to the foreign invaders. Strong sentiments against tyrannies which overthrew the Peisistratids in Athens made the Athenians of Marathon.

Democratic institutions made the Athenians of Marathon

As Herodotus tells us, the Persians landed on Attica before the Athenians had bethought themselves how they would defend the country against the invaders. A fast runner Philippides was despatched to Lacedaemon with the news of the fall of Eretria and with request for immediate help. The Lacedaemonians promised to send help but superstition forbade them to come at once due to new moon. But before they could come after the full moon it was too late. Plataeans, true to their friendly alliance with Athens sent help. The Athenians had thus to do without Spartan help in their struggle against the Persians. With the Plataean help the Athenian army was only ten or eleven thousand strong. The question whether the Athenians should march to Marathon or wait till help arrived from Sparta was decided by the Assembly of the people where Miltiades' suggestion to march at once was accepted. To have proposed and carried this decree is probably the greatest title of Miltiades to immortal fame.'

Appeal to Sparta for help

Superstition stood in the way of the Spartans' coming to Athen's help

Miltiades purposes and carries the Assembly in favour of immediate march to Marathon

The Athenians reached the plain of Marathon by the Northern spurs of Pentecleus, from which they could distinguish the Persians encamped on the shore, the ships in the bay, and the mountains of Euboea. The plain of Marathon stretches along a sickle-shaped line of coast. The choice of the admirable position by the Athenians was more than half the victory. The Athenians were also unassailable in the lower valley, except at a great advantage; they commanded not only the mountain road by which they reached the plain of Marathon, but also the main road and the southern gate

Positions taken by the Athenians and Persians in Marathon

*Relatively
impregnable
position of
the Atheni-
ans:
Persians
superior in
strength*

*Miltiades
and Calli-
machus
decided in
favour of
attack*

*Persians
begin their
march to-
wards Athens*

*Tactics of
Miltiades*

of the plain. This would expose the Persians to flank attack by the Athenians should they attempt to reach the southern gate. The Persians encamped on the northern side of the torrent-bed and their ships were at anchor beside them. Relatively the position of the Athenians was impregnable and they might wait till help from Sparta arrived. The Persians, however, found that their advantage lay in bringing on a pitched battle in the plain, as soon as possible. The Athenians were doubtful whether they ought really to hazard a battle against the Persians at Marathon, who were numerically superior. The commanders were divided on the issue. Miltiades was, however, of opinion that such an attack was absolutely necessary, but the final decision lay with Callimachus who was the Polemarch. Miltiades represented to him that welfare of all depended on a battle with the Persians who would wait no longer and were ready to move upon Athens itself by land and sea. Callimachus voted in the council of war that was held, in favour of attack, thus Miltiades' point was carried. Callimachus took charge of the right wing and the Plataeans who came to help the Athenians, were on the left.

The Persians at last determined to move southwards upon Athens. The entire cavalry and the greater part of the infantry were embarked and the rest prepared to move in columns through the plain for the road at its southern end. The Athenians were now compelled to take the offensive. In order to prevent their line being surrounded on one or the other wing. Miltiades drew up the centre in fewer ranks than usual and made the two wings stronger. This was done to cover the entire length of the enemy line. As the Greeks drew near the enemy they were met by a hail of arrows to escape which they charged through it by running closer to the enemy. The Persians seeing the Athenians approach by running prepared to receive them, and as they observed Athenians to be few in number destitute both of cavalry and archers considered

them as mad and rushing on sure destruction. But as soon as the Greeks mingled with the enemy they behaved with greatest gallantry. "They were the first Greeks that we know of, who ran to attack an enemy; they were the first also who beheld without dismay the dress and armour of the Medes; for hitherto in Greece the very name of a Mede excited terror." But as anticipated the centre of the Athenian line was broken. The Greek wings, however, routed the Persians and finding the Persians pursuing the routed Greeks of the centre, the victorious wings of the Greeks rallied and encircled the Persians who were pursuing the Greeks through the broken centre and routed them completely. The routed Persians fled for the shore where those who could escape the sword were picked up by the ships. The Greeks could not prevent their departure and succeeded in taking only seven of the Persian ships.

*Battle of
Marathon,
Sept., 490
B.C.*

*Greek
gallantry*

*Persians
finally
routed*

Marathon was not a long battle but the Persians left 6400 of their comrades dead on the battlefield with only as small as 192 Athenians slain.

*Persian and
Greek losses*

The Persians retired with their fleet and passed the promontory of Sunium thinking of circumventing the Athenians and reaching their city before the Athenians themselves. The Athenians impute the prosecution of this measure to one of the Athenian renegades who, according to them, held up a shield as a signal to the Persians when they were on soil. Here again Miltiades' skill in logistics was at test. While he saw the Persian fleet doubling the cape of Sunium he anticipated a Persian attack on Athens itself and lost no time in hastening to the defence of the city and effectually prevented the design of the enemy. The Persians now did not venture to land to make a surprise attack. The Persian fleet anchored some distance off Phalerum, an Athenian harbour, remained there for some time, and then retired to Asia.

*Persian
design to
take Athens
by a surprise
attack*

*Miltiades'
preparation
for defence*

After the full moon, as superstition would not permit leaving home after a new moon till there was full

*Arrival of
Spartan help*

moon, the Spartans arrived with 2000 men covering 140 miles in three days—a wonderful performance on bad roads, only to find that the battle was over. They saw the Persians lying dead on the field of Marathon and were full of praise for the Athenians.

To what extent Herodotus' account reliable—its gaps

Herodotus gives the leading facts

Later versions coloured for one or the other reason

2/**Herodotus' Account of the Battle of Marathon** :

The above account mainly based on Herodotus has however many gaps in the way that it does not give the strength of the two armies nor does it explain the reason why the Persian cavalry did not join in the engagement. It also does not explain why the Athenian ventured an engagement in the open field and not from a walled city. For many years the high repute of Herodotus as a historian was scoffed at but it has had a sudden and cordial revival. There is no denying the fact that the account of Herodotus gives the leading facts. It says that "a small force of Greeks charged the Persians who were far more numerous, routed them, pursued them to their ships, and that the same men were at their posts again after a march of about eighteen miles, which they must have begun on the day after the battle in the early morning when the enemy threatened them from another quarter." Different versions of the battle were given in later times either to magnify the Athenian glory or to depreciate the same for party views or other reasons.

Further, minute survey of the Grecian battle fields by George Beardoe Grundy has revealed that Herodotus was remarkably accurate in his topography and in his sifting of evidence and discarding of what he could not definitely substantiate. A typical account of the battle of Marathon by Busolt a German critic who made extremely cautious use of Herodotus does not question the account in respect of the leading facts. His mention of small number of the Greeks was later on interpreted as nine to ten thousand, cannot be taken as accurate, according to Busolt. Further, Athenians' choice of open field to encounter the enemy in preference to a fortified city might have been well-

Gaps in the account of Herodotus explained by Busolt

reasoned, says Busolt. For, the fate of Eretria which fought from the walled city was perhaps the cause of the choice. This apart, the town walls might not have been in best condition. As to why the Persians did not venture a surprise attack on the city of Athens no guess work is necessary. Busolt points out that the defeat of the Persian army was not crushing one, but had been by no means insignificant for the Persian army that left 6400 killed, and a considerable number must have been wounded.

Again, an article by Munro in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies* shows that the Persians chose so disadvantageous a field as Marathon for the battle in order to lure the Athenians out of the city while the plot of throwing the gates of Athens open by the supporters of Hippias was maturing, to admit the Persians by way of Phalerum. But before the plot matured and signal received, Miltiades had routed the Persians and hastened back to Athens to prevent any possible attack on the city.

*Munro's
explanation*

As to the courage of the Greeks Herodotus' praises of the Athenians for being the first Greeks that dared to look the Persians in the face, it has been remarked that the Greeks little realised or knew all they were doing and accomplished so much more than they dreamed or desired. Courage does not reveal itself in any fortuitous results. But Prof. Mahaffy points out that despite the custom of the Greek generals haranguing their soldiers to incite them to fury to safeguard against their timidity, which showed that there was nothing extraordinary about their courage, yet he remarks, the Greeks on that day fought for glory and for love of country.

*Courage of
the Greeks
—criticism*

Thus it may be safely concluded that despite certain gaps here and there, Herodotus was remarkably accurate in his account of the Battle of Marathon although different versions of it in later antiquity led to confusion.

*Herodotus
remarkably
accurate •*

*A decisive
battle of the
world*

3/**Importance of the Battle of Marathon :**

First, Marathon is one of the decisive battles of the world; such it will ever remain, though modern criticism reduces it to comparatively insignificant dimensions in respect of the number engaged and slaughter made. The significance of the victory of Marathon as a triumph of Athens is that it saved the Greek, nay European territories and civilisations from Persian domination. But accepting this general remark about its significance, it must be pointed out that the victory averted only the immediate peril. It must also be remembered that the Persians came not to conquer and annex but to chastise the Athenians.

*Athens,
Greece and
Europe saved*

*Triumph of
Athenian
democracy*

Secondly, the victory of the Athenians was the triumph of democracy, for if Darius had invaded Athens instead of Scythia, he would have been successful, for Athens then was under a Persistratid who would certainly have surrendered to the invader in order to perpetuate his rule with the strength drawn from the Persian emperor. But now that the Persians came to invade Athens, the Athenian democracy fought for the glory as well as for the love of the country. Joining of the invading force by Hippias, the banished tyrant gave Athenians additional motivation to save democracy.

*Epoch in
Athenian
party :
Enhancement
of Athenian
self-reliance
and self-
respect*

Thirdly, the Athenians rightly felt that the victory at Marathon marked an epoch, for the prestige won at Marathon lifted Athens to a great place among the Greek states. It not only enhanced the faith of the Athenians in the Constitution, but infused a great spirit of self-reliance, self-respect in every Athenian. Every Athenian who had taken part in the battle bore henceforth the honourable appellation of *Marathonomachus*. "The enormous prestige which she won by the single-handed victory over the host of the Greek king gave her new self-confidence and ambition; history seemed to have set a splendid seal on her democracy, she felt she could trust her constitution and that she might lift her head as high as any state in Hellas." The Greeks in general likewise took

courage from the exploits of the Athenians at Marathon. A determination to fight for the defence of the country, a desire for sacrifice for the sake of independence swept through whole of Greece which made later defence against Persia possible.

Infused the Greeks in general with a spirit of sacrifice for defence

Fourthly, the Athenians looked back to Marathon to draw inspiration at times of drooping morale. It was a positive direction for the Athenians to play the part it did in times of the perils of Greece and seized the Greek leadership and launched upon an imperial career. For good or evil, Marathon was the signal for the Athenian greatness.

An achievement to look back upon for inspiration

Lastly, looked at from the negative point of view it may be reasonably argued that Marathon did not stop the future Persian invasions, nor would an Athenian defeat have stopped the progress of the Greek civilisation although it might arrest the growth for a time. The victory at Marathon only enhanced the revenge motive of the Persian king. But it should be pointed out that Athenian defeat would have laid Athens low under the old tyrant Hippias, who would become a bond man of the Persians. But this might not have stopped the effort of the Persians to expand. Clash of Greece and Persia for the latter's effort at expansion lay in the logic of history. Later invasions by Persia were not a question of vengeance. If Darius had stopped, his successor would undoubtedly go on. As Prof. Bury observes, 'history of the world does not depend on proximate cause'. An Athenian defeat would have, therefore, been much more disastrous for it would have shaken the faith of the Athenians and for that matter, of the Greeks in themselves and contributed to the defeat of the Greeks at the hands of the Persians at the time of these later invasions. Athenian victory at Marathon made the later victory of the Greeks over the Persians possible for reasons already discussed above.

Negative point of view

Possible consequences in the event of Athenian defeat

Conclusion

4/Causes of Athenian Success in the Battle of Marathon : "Marathon was a triumph of the intelli-

*Superior tact,
discipline
and arma-
ment on the
Greek side*

gent use of tactics, discipline and armament" (Camb. Hist.). Although there has been some controversy as to numbers engaged in the battle of Marathon and losses sustained by both sides, yet modern historians including the German critic Busolt agree that Herodotus was 'remarkably accurate' in his account. According to Herodotus a small number of the Athenians fought against numerous Persians. The numbers have been put by later historians as 9000 on the Athenian side and an incredibly huge number on the Persian side. The fact, however, remains that the Athenians had to fight against several times their number. This needed intelligent deployment of the soldiers, and Miltiades met the demand of the situation.

*Miltiades
carries the
Assembly
with him*

(1) When the Assembly met to decide whether the Athenians should meet the Persians at Marathon or wait till they approached the acropolis, Miltiades proposed to march on to Marathon and carried the Assembly with him. This proposal made and carried, entitled Miltiades to immortal fame.

*Choice of
advantageous
site*

(2) The choice of the site for encampment was half the victory. Miltiades stationed his forces in a position which made them not only unassailable but gave them a commanding position overlooking the road to Athens and southern gate of the plain.

*Miltiades
and
Callimachus
arranges
Athenian
army most
strategically*

(3) At the time of action when the Athenians started moving to reach Athens both Callimachus and Miltiades did the best use of their poor number by strengthening the two wings and thinning the centre of the army line. This was an army strategy which paid, for when the centre was broken the two wings were victorious and the Persians as they were pursuing the fleeing Athenians of the centre were encircled from two wings.

*Close prox-
imity rendered
Persian
arrows
ineffective*

(4) Again Athenians fell upon the Persians—running upon them—which saved them from the aims of the archers, for their nearness to the Persians prevented

uses of arrows. This was done with a lightning speed and all was over within a short time and the Persians made for their ships.

Hand-to-hand fighting gave superiority of the Athenian shield and spear

(5) For hand-to-hand fight, the Greek shield and spear proved more effective than the Persians bows and arrows.

(6) The quick decisions taken and implemented required a great sense of discipline but for which it would have been impossible to achieve victory against heavy odds.

Quick decisions implemented with great discipline

(7) Assuming after historian Munro that the Persians had chosen the plain of Marathon—a definitely disadvantageous position to fight against the Athenians—to lure the Athenian troops out of Marathon so that the conspiracy which was afoot through Hippias to get the gates of Athens thrown open to the Persians might succeed, the Athenian general Miltiades deserves greater credit, for he hurried back to Athens to forestall the Persian design after the battle of Marathon.

Persian design on Athens after Marathon forestalled

(8) The Athenians fought for glory and for their love of country, naturally they fought with greater determination than the mercenaries that composed the Persian ranks.

(9) Lastly, it was a fight of democracy against autocracy. Democracy represented life whereas autocracy represented routine, the Athenians represented discipline, the Persians numbers, the Athenians represented intellect and mind, the Persians represented matter. Naturally the former triumphed over the the latter as a matter of natural course.

5/Miltiades : Miltiades, son of Cimon, succeeded his brother Stesagoras as the tyrant of Thacian Chersonese. He was the nephew of Miltiades (senior) who came to possess Chersonese as a tyrant. By a stratagem Miltiades, son of Cimon, arrested the leading men at Chersonese and thereby removed the possibility of any local leader's bid for the tyranny. He strengthened

Miltiades succeeds to the tyranny of Chersonese.

his position by maintaining a body of 500 mercenaries and by marrying the daughter of the Thracian King Olorus.

His suggestion to break the bridge to prevent return of Darius

In his European expedition Darius was helped by contingents from various Greek cities commanded by their despots among whom was Miltiades of Thracian Chersonese. But Miltiades was no friend of the Persians. When Darius and his army had crossed over to Scythia by throwing a bridge of boats across the mouth of the Danube it was Miltiades who agreeing with the suggestion of the Scythians pleaded for breaking the bridge. But the counsel of Histiaeus to the contrary ultimately prevailed and the bridge was not broken. If the advice of Miltiades had been adopted, the subsequent Persian invasion of Greece might never have taken place.

Miltiades enemy of the Persians

Miltiades' enmity towards the Persians was manifest in his active sympathy for the Ionian rebels. During the Ionian revolt he seized for Athens the isles of Lemnos and Imbros. The excursion of Darius beyond the Danube, so far as it was intended to make an impression upon the Scythians proved ineffective and shortly after this (c. 496 B.C.) the Scythians raided Thrace and Miltiades had to flee Chersonese and reach Athens *via* Imbros avoiding a near capture at the hands of the Phoenicians. Enemies of Miltiades accused him of crime of oppression in Chersonese but he was acquitted by his fellow citizens to whom he had brought the gift of Lemnos and Imbros.

Miltiades—soul of the Athenian resistance against Persia

Miltiades was a sworn enemy of the Peisistratids who had put to death his father, Cimon. He, more than any other Athenian, had a first-hand knowledge of the Persians. It was only wise on the part of the Athenians to select him as one of the strategi when the Persians invaded Athens joined by Hippias the expelled Peisistratid of Athens. Miltiades was the soul of the resistance which his country offered to the invader at Marathon.

At the battle of Marathon, the Greeks although united discipline with courage, they had committed the folly of dividing the command among ten generals each to be in supreme command for a day, besides, there was the Polemarch or the War Archon. In the council of war that met before the battle the question was whether to attack or to await an attack. The commanders were divided in their opinion. Miltiades urged an immediate attack. It seemed for a time that more faint-hearted policy would be adopted. But Miltiades turned to Callimachus, the Polemarch and said "It is now in your hands, Callimachus either to enslave Athens or to make her free and to leave behind you for all future generations a memory more glorious than ever Harmodius and Aristogeiton left. Never in the course of our long history have we Athenians been in such peril as now. If we submit to the Persian invader, Hippias will be restored to power in Athens—and there is little doubt what misery must then ensue; but if we fight and win, then this city of ours may well grow to pre-eminence amongst all the cities of Greece. If you ask me how this can be, and how the decision rests with you, I will tell you : we commanders are ten in number, and we are not agreed upon what action to take; half of us are for a battle, half against it. If we refuse to fight, I have little doubt that the result will be the rise in Athens of bitter political dissension; our purpose will be shanken, and we shall submit to Persia. But if we fight before the rot can show itself in any of us, then if God gives us fair play, we can not only fight but win. Yours is the decision; all hangs upon you; vote on my side, and our country will be free—yes, and the mistress of Greece. But if you support those who have voted against fighting, that happiness will be denied you—you will get the opposite." Miltiades' argument prevailed and Callimachus voted for fighting. But there was yet another snag. Each of the ten generals was to be in supreme command for a day by turn. But Aristides voluntarily yielded his leadership to Miltiades and

*Folly of
divided
command*

*Miltiades'
arguments:
He prevailed
over the war
council*

*His vigorous
strategy*

others followed his example. This corrected the folly of appointing ten generals and dividing the command. Under Miltiades' vigorous strategy and deployment of soldiers the small Greek force routed the Persian horde in what was not only one of the decisive battles but also one of the most incredible victories of history. When the Persians were already in their ships after their defeat at the battle of Marathon, a signal was given to them by flashing of a shield. The popular explanation of the time was that the Persians were thereby asked to invade Athens by water. But that move was frustrated by Miltiades again who hurried troops to Athens for defence.

*Marathon
legend:
Undue
glorification
of Miltiades*

Legend grew up quickly round the battle and Miltiades was glorified at the cost of all other generals. When a generation had passed, facts were partly forgotten and partly transfigured. Transfiguration might have been due to three motives as Prof. Bury points out, namely, love of the marvellous, vanity of the Athenians and the desire of his family to exalt the services of Miltiades. At any rate, Miltiades was the heart and soul of the campaign. Although there might have been some overdoing in praising Miltiades and a positive injustice to other generals including Polemarch Callimachus in not giving their due, yet victory at Marathon was particularly due to the extraordinarily brilliant strategy and tactics of Miltiades.

*Miserable
end of
Miltiades*

But the end of the man who was immortalised by the victory at Marathon was miserable. He was put to the command of an expedition against the island of Paros, for the Parians had furnished a trireme to the armament of Datis and thereby made war upon Athens. Miltiades besieged the island for more than three weeks but returned home without success and personally injured. His enemies, jealous of his exploits at Marathon imputed the failure to criminal conduct of Miltiades and accused him of deceiving the Athenian people. He was tried. He appeared on a couch at his trial, but was unable to speak in his own defence

as gangrene had started in his wounded leg. His friends spoke for him dwelling mainly on his services at the battle of Marathon and his capture of Lemnos and Imbros. The popular verdict was to spare his life but to fine him fifty talent. But his gangrene grew worse and he died soon after. His son Cimon paid the fine.

CHAPTER 3

Thermopylae : Artemisium : Salamis : Platea : Mycale

*Preparation
for another
expedition*

*Death of
Darius*

*Accession of
Xerxes ·
Revolt of
Egypt sub-
dued*

*Decision in
favour of the
expedition---
joint attack
by sea and
land*

*Irresistible
expeditionary
force*

1/**March of Xerxes** : The Persian repulse at Marathon was as unexpected as ignominious. When the news of the battle of Marathon was communicated to Darius who had already been incensed against the Athenians for their invasion of Sardis became still more exasperated and at once decided to invade Greece. Preparations for a second expedition were set afoot. But in 486 Egypt revolted and its suppression called for immediate attention. Besides, a quarrel broke out between Darius' sons Artobazanes and Xerxes as to who would succeed him. Death of Darius in 485 B.C. delayed action against Egypt as also the second expedition against Greece. Darius having declared Xerxes his heir, he succeeded to the Persian throne. Xerxes' first task was to subdue Egypt which he accomplished in 484. He then turned to the question of avenging the defeat at Marathon. Herodotus gives an account of the Persian magnates consulted to the royal house giving opposing counsel. Artabanus, uncle to Xerxes, counselled restraint after dwelling upon the valiance of the Greeks who routed the numerous troops of Datis and Artaphernes, the danger inherent in crossing the Hellespont with a huge army, possibility of storms in the sea putting the vast Persian fleet to difficulty, etc. But eventually the impetuous counsel of Xerxes' cousin Mardonius who was also the general at that time prevailed and it was decided to lead an expedition against Greece, which must consist of a joint attack by sea and land.

Profiting by the lesson of the first expedition, it was decided that the new expeditionary force should be of irresistible strength and that it should act throughout in

closest co-operation with the fleet. This naturally involved following a route by the northern Aegean and Thrace, and the provision of some safety in the neighbourhood of the dangerous promontory of Athos. The engineers reported the practicability of avoiding the promontory entirely by cutting a canal through the neck of the peninsula. The canal of Athos dug by the Persians was no mere display of power as Herodotus suggests, but a really useful undertaking. For, the fundamental principle of the Persian strategy was that the army and the navy should co-operate and never lose touch. After the canal was dug a bridge was thrown over the great river Strymon for the passage of the army. Preparations were made all along the route for provisions for the army.

*Canal of
Athos exca-
vated*

*Bridge over
Strymon*

Xerxes made preparations rather leisurely and took four years to collect troops and materials from all the provinces of his empire and when in 481 B.C. he at last set forth, his army was perhaps the largest ever collected in whole history before the present century. Xerxes came down to Sardis in Autumn of 481, where he inspected his oriental contingent. The place of mustering of his whole army was at the Hellespont across two bridges had been constructed in the neighbourhood of Sestos and Abydos by the phoenician and Egyptian engineers. At Dorsicus a grand review of the host was held. The grand total according to Herodotus' computation was "2,641,000 fighting men and an equal number of engineers, slaves, merchants, provisioners and prostitutes." Historians have ever since doubted the veracity of the number mentioned by Herodotus without any moderation, and conceding that the army was the largest mustered ever in history, for the purpose of a single expedition, before the present century, there must have been great exaggerations. The vast army was naturally and fatally too, a highly heterogeneous force. Herodotus has given us a list of forty-six peoples,* with description of their dresses and weapons.

Xerxes' army

*Strength ex-
aggerated*

*Highly hetero-
geneous
force of
forty-six
nationalities*

*"There were Persians, Medes, Babylonians, Afghans, Indians, Bactrians,

*The great
host sets
forth for the
Hellespont*

Towards the end of 481 B.C. the preparations for the expedition were completed, and the contingent of the eastern part of the empire mustered at Critalla in Cappadocia. In the autumn of the same year Xerxes here took command of the contingent. The army meandered its way to Sardis and by the spring of 480 it set forth for the Hellespont. There were footmen, cavalry men, chariots, elephants, and a fleet of transports and fighting triremes numbering 1207 ships in all, according to Herodotus.

*Crossing the
Hellespont*

*Progress of
the army*

*Surrender of
northern
Greece except
Plataea and
Thespieae*

*Patriotic
Greeks—
Spartans and
Athenians
resolve to
fight*

By the spring of 480, the great host reached the Hellespont, where the Egyptian and Phoenician engineers had built a bridge across it using the most admired mechanical devices of the antiquity. It took seven days and nights for the great host comprising men and beasts to pass over the bridge. The army marched overland through Thrace and down to Macedonia and Thessaly; the Persian fleet proceeded hugging the coasts. Cities where the army had two meals, we are told, were utterly ruined; Thasos spent 400 talents—about a million dollars in modern computation, to play the host to Xerxes for a day only. The huge army struck terror among the northern Greeks who up to the Attic frontier, surrendered—at times bribed to surrender, and allowed their troops to be added to Xerxes' millions. Plataea and Thespieae who were the only exceptions in the north, prepared to fight. "The Dorians and the Ionians, that is to say, Sparta and Athens, were the flower of the patriotic half of Greece, which could justly consider itself the true Hellas. These Greeks resolved that the Hellenese who had submitted to the Persians should be compelled to pay a tribute to the Delphic god after the hoped-for victory of the Greeks". The Dorians, i.e. the Spartans were the most numerous of the patriotic Greeks, but the

Sogdians, Sacae, Assyrians, Armenians, Colchians, Sayths, Palonians, Mysians, Paphlagonians, Phrygians, Thracians, Thessalians, Locrians, Boeotians, Aeolians, Ionians, Lydians, Carians, Cilicians, Cypriots, Phoenicians, Syrians, Arabians, Egyptians, Ethiopians, Libyans, and many more". Will Durant, *The Life of Greece*, p. 238.

incentive or the leadership to a vigorous resistance came not from them but from the Ionians, i.e. the Athenians. True that the Athenians were most directly threatened but it may be pointed out that if they so desired, they could have come to an understanding with the Persians at the expense of the rest of Greece. The verdict of Herodotus that Greece owed her liberty to the Athenians holds good, for in a campaign by land, if Xerxes had played his card well the Greeks might have been crushed simply by the numerical strength of the Persian army. Safety lay in adequate number of good fleet and it was Athens who had not only good ships but good naval commanders as well. But among the Athenians, it was Themistocles to whom must go the chief credit. It was he who was the author of the fortification of Piraeus and effected the increase of the Athenian fleet.

*Leadership
offered by
Athens*

*Athens saviour
of Greece
because of
her good
ships and
good naval
commanders*

The Greeks had ample warning of the blow which threatened them. In autumn of 480 a national congress, the Synedrium of the Probuli or representatives of the patriotic states was convened in the isthmus of Corinth in order to plan for a concerted resistance. The Congress of Corinth assembled under the influence of common fear from Persia had more of a Panhellenic character than any political event which had yet occurred in Grecian history. Sparta by reason of her acknowledged leadership, and Athens by reason of her naval supremacy and victory at Marathon were the natural centres of the national resistance. As a preliminary it was resolved that all states must set aside their mutual feuds and disputes (between Thessaly and Phocis, Argos and Lacedaemon, Athens and Aegina) so that all might fight side by side like brothers for the common freedom. The states, thirty-one in number, also vowed that they would utterly destroy the traitors who surrendered to the barbarian. A large number of states, the Thessalians, most of the Boeotian cities and smaller states of northern Greece took no part in the Congress. The inaction of the

*Congress of
Corinth*

*States set
aside their
mutual
disputes*

*Inaction of
the states of
northern
Greece*

*Justification
of their
inaction*

northern states was justified by their geographical position and by the natural instinct of self-preservation. It would be futile for them to think of resisting the Persians unless Sparta and her confederates would support them. This would mean relying entirely on the strength of Sparta and her confederates. There was also no reason to suppose that Sparta and her confederates would throw their strength in the defence of northern Greece. In the circumstances it would have been imprudent on their part to compromise their position by openly joining the confederacy. They naturally decided to wait and see how things would turn out.

*Question of
leadership*

The question of leadership was somewhat ticklish. The claim of Sparta to the leadership of the army was at once admitted, but that of the navy was rather complicated. Athens which would furnish the largest number of ships to the confederate navy as well as good naval commander had naturally a fair claim to the leadership of the naval force. But other cities which were jealous of Athens refused to be under the command of any leader other than a Spartan. The Athenian representatives did not hesitate to forgo such a legitimate claim at once in the interest of the Greek freedom. Athenian concern for the common freedom exhibited on many more occasions besides this, made her the saviour of Greece against Persia. To renounce at the call of public obligation a claim in itself so reasonable and an opportunity for personal honour and glory, is perhaps the rarest of all virtues in a Greek.

*Sacrifice of
Athens for
the common
freedom*

*Spies and
envoys sent
out*

*Return of
the spies*

The Congress then proceeded to send envoys and solicit co-operation from such cities as were yet either equivocal or indifferent specially Argos, Corcyra, and the Cretan and Sicilian Greeks. Spies were despatched across to Sardis to gather information. These spies, having been detected and condemned to death by the Persian generals were released by the express order of Xerxes, returned to Greece. They had been

shown the full strength of the Persian armament before their release in the hope that the terror of the Greeks might be magnified on their report. Discouragement throughout Greece was already extreme and even to intelligent and well-meaning Greeks, much more to the careless, the timid or the treacherous, Xerxes with his countless host appeared irresistible and indeed something more than human. Such an impression was naturally encouraged by the large number of Greeks already his tributaries. In fact, there were manifestation of a wish to get rid of the Athenians altogether as the chief objects of Persians vengeance and chief hindrance to tranquil submission. But the Greeks were nerved up to a pitch of resistance at the Congress of Corinth. The envoys from Argo, Crete, Corcyra, etc., returned with no more real hope of assistance except some fair words from the Corcyraeans. The endeavours of the deputies of Greeks at the Isthmus of Corinth had thus produced no other reinforcement to their cause.

General discouragement in Greece

Envoys returned with no real hope of assistance

After the preparations for the defence of Greece were made and the generals appointed, the Congress was convened again and the conduct of the military affairs was consigned to the military councils of commanders under the leadership of the Spartans. Spartan King Leonidas was leader of the confederate army and Eurybiades a Spartan of commoner was appointed the commander of the confederate fleet. Defences of cities were strengthened and new ships were built. Athens was perhaps most energetic in adding to her fleet. She recalled those of her distinguished citizens who had been ostracised and banished for ten years. Aristides and Xanthippus returned home and the quarrel between them and Themistocles was buried in the face of the national danger.

Leonidas and Eurybiades —both Spartans appointed to the command

Building of new ships —Athens recalls her banished citizens

Initially it seemed that opposition to the invader would be made on the frontier of Greece, on the most northernly line. About the time of the crossing of the Hellespont by Xerxes and his host, the Thessalians

First line of defence

*Troops with-
drawn from
Tempe*

asked the confederates to adopt that line of defence and ten thousand men were sent to the vale of Tempe between Mount Olympus and Mount Ossa. But it was found that Xerxes was not likely to follow that route and might enter Thessaly either through the pass of Volustana or the pass of Petra. As it was not possible to send more troops to the northern border, leaving the rest of Greece unprotected, in order to defend all the three passes, the troops were withdrawn from Tempe abandoning Thessaly to the enemy.

*Second line
of defence:
Pass of
Thermo-
pylae*

A second line of defence was constituted by the range of Mount Oeta and the mouth of the Euboean channel. On this line the pass of Thermopylae was the gateway to Greece. Its loss would mean loss of Boeotia, Athens and all the country north of the Isthmus of Corinth. At the eastern and the western end the pass was very narrow and at the centre the Phocians had constructed a wall as a barrier against Thessalian incursions. The Greeks determined to defend Thermopylae and King Leonidas marched up to it at the head of his army seven thousand strong including four thousand Peloponnesians of whom again three hundred were Spartans. Needless to say three hundred Spartans constituted only a very small portion of their forces and it may very well be suspected that but for Athens the Spartans would have concentrated their full force on the defence of the Isthmus of Corinth. But their dependence on the Athenian fleet practically compelled them to consider the interest of the Athenians. Despite their defending Thermopylae, the Spartans' hearts were set on the defence of the Isthmus, for their policy was narrow, selfish and hence strictly Peloponnesian. To cover up their selfish and short-sighted policy in sending only a very small portion of their army for the defence of Thermopylae, they gave out that it was only an advance guard, the bulk of the army being delayed due to the celebration of Carnean festival and the Olympic games.

*Leonidas
leads his
army to the
Pass*

*Spartans
numbered
three hun-
dred—
narrow,
selfish policy
of Sparta*

As the Persian land forces were closely supported by

Persian navy, the Greeks decided to oppose the Persian fleet at the mouth of Euboea, and therefore the Greek fleet was placed to guard it near Artemisium. The Greek navy numbered 324 triremes and 9 pentaconters.

*Greek navy
at Arle-
misium*

2/**Thermopylae:** The Greeks who assembled at Thermopylae were seized with so much terror on the approach of the Persians that they consulted about a retreat. Those of the Peloponnesus were in general of opinion that they should return and guard the Isthmus; but the Phocians and Locrians disagreed. Leonidas, however, prevailed on them to continue on their post.

*Terror seized
the Greeks*

In July, 480 B.C. Xerxes arrived at Thermopylae and the Persian navy at the Magnesian coast. The size and the number of the Persian ships prevented these to be moored to the coast and had to be kept in lines out in the sea when a storm destroyed a considerable number of the ships thus lessening the inequality between the Persian and the Greek forces. Even after their losses the numerical superiority of the Persians struck terror in the hearts of the Greek commanders who wanted to retreat to the gulf of Corinth but were dissuaded from doing so by Themistocles, the Athenian.

*Xerxes at
Thermopylae:
Fleet at
Magnesian
coast*

In the mean time Xerxes finding the pass extremely narrow with the now repaired old Phocian wall in its centre, decided to wait. He waited four days expecting that the Greeks would retreat awed by the sight of the huge Persian army. On the fifth day observing that they continued on their post, merely as he supposed, from the impudent rashness, he became much exasperated and sent a detachment with a command to bring the Greek defenders of Thermopylae alive to his presence. The Persian detachment attacked the Greeks only to lose a considerable number. A reinforcement made the position no better, no impression was made. It now became clear to Xerxes that he had many troops but few men.* Xerxes replaced the

*Xerxes waits
for four days*

*Attack on the
fifth day*

*According to Plutarch Leonidas being asked how he dared to encounter so prodigious a multitude with so few men, replied: "If you reckon my number, all Greece is not able to oppose a small part of that army; but if by courage, the number I have with me is sufficient."

*The Persians
failed to
make much
impression
upon the
Greeks*

detachment by a band of Persians called by him *the Immortals* and commanded by Hydarnes. But *the Immortals* also failed to make any impression upon the Greek defenders. The Lacedaemonians fought in a manner which deserves to be recorded; their own excellent discipline, and the unskilfulness of their adversaries, were in many instances remarkable. The loss of the Persians was prodigious, and a few also of the Spartans fell. It is said that Xerxes, being a spectator of the contest thrice leaped from his throne being alarmed for the safety of his men.

*Phocians
retreat*

While Xerxes was exceedingly perplexed as to the conduct to pursue in the present emergency Ephialtes, son of Eurydemus, a Malian, demanded an audience. Ephialtes expected to receive some great recompense for showing him the path which led over the mountain to Thermopylae to encircle the Greeks in the pass. Xerxes was greatly satisfied and immediately commanded to avail of the assistance of Ephialtes. The secret march continued throughout the night. At the dawn of morning the Persian detachment under Hydarnes led by Ephialtes found itself at the submit where a band of a thousand Phocians in arms was stationed both to defend their country and the pass. The Phocian troops not able to sustain the heavy flight of arrows from the Persians retreated but were not pursued by Hydarnes because it was not thought worthwhile.

*Bulk of the
Greek
defenders
withdraws*

Intelligence reached Leonidas of the movement of the Persians, which threatened the Greeks in the pass. A council of war was held. It was decided that the Lacedaemonians, Thebans and the Thespians should remain to defend the pass while the rest retired eastwards, probably in order to attack the flank of the Persians descending the hills. The story that the withdrawal of the main body was a desertion is doubted by some. It is said that those who retired only did so in compliance with the wishes of Leonidas who was desirous to preserve them; but he thought that he

himself, with his Spartans, could not without the greatest ignominy forsake the post they had come to defend.

Early in the morning the *barbarians* with Xerxes approached. Leonidas and his Greeks proceeded, as to inevitable death, a much greater space from the defile than they had yet done. Till now they had defended themselves behind entrenchment, fighting in the most contracted part of the passage. But on that day they engaged on a wider space. In the assault a multitude of their opponents fell. Behind each troop of the Persian fighters officers were stationed with whips in their hands compelling with blows their men to advance. Many fell into the sea, many were trodden under foot by their own troops. The Greeks, conscious that their destruction was at hand, exerted themselves with the most desperate valour against their barbarian assailants. Many of the noblest Persians fell, among them two half-brothers of the king. Leonidas also fell and a Homeric contest was waged for his body. At last the spears of the Greeks were broken, and the Persians now began to pour into the pass from its eastern end. The remnant of the Greek defenders retired to a hillock for the last stand and desperately fighting to the last. They were surrounded and slain by overwhelming number of the Persians. Three hundred Spartans were killed to a man. Among the Spartans special glory attached to Dieneces who is said to have answered the complaint that the Persian arrows darkened the air with the words: *Good, then we shall fight in the shade.* The Spartans who died to a man were thus distinguished:

‘Go stranger, and to listening Spartans tell
That here, obedient to their laws, we fell.’

The Persians are said to have lost twenty thousand men. Among them were several of royal blood. Xerxes, the victor of the battle of Thermopylae is said to have mutilated the body of Leonidas. We ought not to expect accuracy in the numbers slain nor in the tradition relating various incidents in the battle.

Final assault

*Losses in the
battle*

*300 Spartans
fell to a man.*

Persian loss

*Results of
Thermo-
pylae:*

*Deep impres-
sion on
Xerxes*

At Thermopylae, Xerxes learnt a lesson which he had earlier refused to receive from the warnings of Demaratus. With altered spirit he is said to have enquired whether he had to expect many such obstacles in the conquest of Greece. The defence of Thermopylae offered by the Spartans made a deep impression on Xerxes. The prospect of a more powerful and obstinate resistance that Xerxes would meet with made him decide to send a detachment of his fleet to seize the island of Cythera and to invest the coast of Laconia so that the Greek confederacy would be distracted and perhaps disunited making Xerxes' task easier. But happily for the safety of Greece, Achaemenes, brother of Xerxes interposed to dissuade the monarch from this prudent plan.

*Key of
northern
Greece in the
hands of
Xerxes*

*Ruin of the
Phocians-
Thessalian
malice*

*Sack of the
Temple at
Delphi
ordered*

The victory at Thermopylae gave the key of northern Greece in the hands of Xerxes. The Thessalian nobles now getting an opportunity to gratify their cupidity or their revenge persuaded Xerxes to march against Phocians, their hated rivals. Many of the Phocians saved themselves by fleeing but those who remained in their homes, fields, cities or temples had to face the fury of the invaders stimulated by the malice of the Thessalians. Fire and sword, the cruelty and the lust of irritated spoilers ravaged the vale of Cephissus down to the borders of Boeotia. Xerxes divided his forces and despatched a detachment to Delphi, with orders to strip the temple of its treasures and lay them at his feet. The great army turned off towards the lower vale of Cephissus to pursue its march through Boeotia to Athens. 'Having thus succeeded in breaking through the inner gate of Hellas, and slain the king of the leading state, Xerxes continued his way and passed from Locris into Phocis and thence into Boeotia with no resistance.'

*Illustration of
of loyal
defence*

Legends soon grew round the Spartan defence at Thermopylae, but shorn of the legendary exaggerations, the battle of Thermopylae, insofar as it concerned the Greeks, continued to remain as an illustration of

bravery and loyalty from which generations of Greeks drew inspiration. 'Thermopylae had become the type for all time, of loyal defence that ends only when life ends.'

3/Artemisium: The defeat at Thermopylae entailed the retirement of the Greek fleet. To engage the Persian fleet at Artemisium was absolutely essential for the maintenance of Thermopylae and to the general plan of defence. First encounter with the Persian fleet took place between three Greek vessels reconnoitring in the Thermaic gulf and ten large, swift vessels of the enemy. The Greeks succeeded in capturing thirty Persian ships. The night was stormy; two hundred Persian ships were wrecked off the dangerous coast known as the Hollows. This enabled the fifty-three Attic ships at the Epirus to join the main body. Here in the strait of Artemisium several skirmishes took place but no decisive result was reached. All the same, as the Persians were the assailants on the last occasion, it appeared as though the Greeks were being gradually beaten from their post. In the mean time the news of the disaster reached the Greek fleet at Artemisium, which released the fleet, for nothing could be gained by holding the strait. The Greeks forthwith weighed anchor and sailed to the shores of Attica.

*Indecisive
battle of
Artemisium*

*Defeat at
Thermopylae
released the
Greek fleet
—it with-
drew*

On their return from Artemisium Athenians saw with indignant disappointment as well as dismay that the conqueror was in full march from Thermopylae, that road to Athens was open to him and the Peloponnesians were absorbed exclusively in the defence of their own Isthmus and their own separate existence. The fleet from Artemisium had been directed to muster at the harbour of Troezen, there to await such reinforcement as could be got together. But Athenians entreated Eurybiades to halt at Salamis so as to allow them a short time for consultation in the critical state of their affairs and to aid them in the transport of their families. Salamis thus became, for the time being the naval station of the Greeks.

*Greek fleet
halts at
Salamis*

*Evacuation
of the city
of Athens*

Meanwhile Themistocles and the Athenian seamen made their mournful entry into Athens. Gloomy as the prospect appeared, there was little room for difference of opinion and still less time for delay. The authorities and the public assembly at once issued a proclamation, enjoining every Athenian to remove his family out of the country. We may better imagine the state of tumult and terror that followed this order for mass evacuation and that again in less than six days. The migration of so many men, women and children was a scene of tears and misery only inferior to what would have happened if they remained in the city when it was captured by the Persians.

*Highest pitch
of resolution*

4/**Salamis:** In the midst of circumstances thus calamitous and threatening neither the warriors nor the leaders of Athens lost their energy. Their arms and minds were strung to the highest pitch of human resolution. The population of Athens moved—those of military competence to the fleet at Salamis—rest to some place of refuge. So complete was the desertion, that the host of Xerxes when became its master, could not seize and carry off more than five hundred prisoners; some were slain and the Greek temples plundered and burnt.

*Themistocles
forces the
council of
war to
decide on
fighting in
the narrow
Salamian
waters*

The combined fleet which had now got together at Salamis consisted of three hundred and sixty-six ships—a force far greater than at Artemisium. Of this number no less than two hundred belonged to Athens. After the fall of the Acropolis the Greek generals held a council of war, and it was decided by a majority vote that they should retreat to the Isthmus. This would mean leaving Aegina, Salamis, and Megara to their fate. Themistocles as also the Aeginetans and Megarians opposed it. Themistocles after a private parley with Eurybiades convinced him that it would be much more advantageous to fight in the narrow Salaman channel than in the open bay of the Isthmus where the superior number and the large ships of the Persians were more likely to deal effective blow to the Greek

fleet. In a fresh council of war hot words were exchanged and Themistocles had even to threaten withdrawal of the Athenian fleet. Themistocles eventually won the day and it was resolved to fight in the Salamanian waters.

Meanwhile Xerxes himself descended to the shore to inspect his fleet as also to take counsel with the naval leaders about the expediency of attacking the hostile fleet. All naval leaders pronounced in favour of immediate fighting. One exception to this unanimity was Artemisia, queen of Halicarnassus in Caria who according to Herodotus deprecated all idea of fighting in the narrow strait of Salamis, predicting that if the land-force were moved forward to attack the Peloponnesus, the Peloponnesians in the fleet at Salamis would retreat for the protection of their own homes and thus the fleet would disperse. The queen gave the alternative advice of waiting till the little provision of the Greeks in the island of Salamis was exhausted and thereby compelling the Greeks to disperse. Xerxes heard the advice with perfect good temper and even esteemed the Carian queen more highly, though he resolved that the opinion of the majority should be acted upon. Orders were accordingly issued for attacking the next day, while the land-force should move forward towards the Peloponnesus.

*Xerxes decides
to attack the
Greek fleet*

From the point of naval strategy it would be best for the Greeks to lure the Persian fleet to enter the Salamis Bay, and for the Persians to force the Greek fleet out into the open sea. Xerxes foreseeing that the Greek fleet might escape at night moved the forces so as to enclose the ingresses of the two straits on either side of Psythalea island as also on the island itself. This was done for the double purpose of rescuing the Persians if necessary and to kill the Greeks who might swim ashore during the engagement. These movements unnerved the Greeks and the Peloponnesian naval leaders brought pressure on Eurybiades to convoke another council. Angry controversy went on between

*Naval
strategy:
Greek and
Persian*

*Xerxes'
steps*

*A fresh
council of
war convoked
by
Eurybiades*

*Themistocles'
stratagem*

*A naval
battle sought
to be forced
on the Greeks*

*Stratagem
succeeds*

*Persian
defeat at
Salamis:*

the Grecian chiefs. Themistocles foreseeing that his previous success in forcing his own plan of fighting in the narrow strait would be overthrown now, determined on a stratagem while prolonging the debate purposefully. It was his interest to prevent any concluding vote till his stratagem would make retreat impossible. Nor was prolongation difficult in a case so critical. The debate was unfinished even at nightfall or perhaps continued all night till an hour before day-break. In the mean time Themistocles despatched a slave named Sicinnus to the Persian camp with the word, as if from a well-wisher, that the Greeks had fallen out between themselves and the Greek fleet would sail away at night. Should Xerxes prevent their retreat and force an engagement, Persian victory was more than certain, particularly due to the disunity in the Greek camp. Xerxes believed this message and at night-fall took measures to prevent retreat of the Greek fleet. Two hundred ships were sent by him to bar the straits.

An hour before dawn when the Greek generals were still hotly discussing the question of retreat, news reached them through Aristides, the recalled rival of Themistocles ostracised only three years back, that the Persian fleet had surrounded the Greek fleet. This intelligence was confirmed by a Tenian ship which deserted from the Persian fleet: Themistocles expressed his joy at the intelligence, for it was he who had brought the movement about, in order that the Peloponnesian chiefs might be forced to fight at Salamis against their own consent.

As the day dawned the Persians began to advance into the straits and as the Persian divisions crowded through the narrow straits, the Athenian squadron immediately advanced and a fierce fighting ensued which lasted throughout the day. There was no room for the exercise of tactical skill in the narrow waters. The large Persian ships marooned by their own number were soon dispersed by the smaller and lighter Greek

ships which although were hesitant to begin with lost no time to show their valour and disperse the hostile fleet. The Persians with great bravery under the eyes of their king, but besides the largeness of their size and number, they were badly generalled. By dusk the great armament of Xerxes was badly mauled and Aristides, stationed on the shore, watching the discomfiture of the Persians crossed over to Psythalea and killed the Persian contingent placed there by Xerxes to kill the runaway Greeks.

The signal defeat of the Persians at Salamis was certainly not due to any want of courage, but, *first*, to the narrow space which rendered the superior number and larger size of the Persian ships a hindrance, rather than a benefit. *Secondly*, to the orderly line and discipline as compared with the Greeks. *Thirdly*, to the bad generalship on their side. *Fourthly*, to the fact that once fortune seemed to turn against them, they had no fidelity or reciprocal attachment and each ally was willing to sacrifice or even to run down others in order to effect his escape. *Fifthly*, their number and absence of concerted action threw them into confusion and caused them to run foul of one another, those in front could not recede, nor could those in rear advance, oars were broken due to collision and steersmen lost control of their ships.

*Causes of the
Persian
defeat*

According to Diodorus the invaders lost two hundred vessels, the defenders only forty. We have, however, not the Persian side of the story. The battle of Salamis became a watchword of Greek triumph yet it by no means solved the problem of independence, for great army of the Persian King was still in the country enjoying confidence of many Greek allies. The defeated Persian fleet itself was still of sufficient power to be a lively danger. Yet the Greek victory at Salamis was a heavy, perhaps a decisive blow to the naval arm of the Persian power. The defeat at Salamis was ascribed by Xerxes to the Phoenicians and Xerxes' wrath having been great, the remnant of the Phoenician

*Results of
Salamis*

*Greek
exaggeration*

contingent deserted. Although the Greeks represented Xerxes as having been "smitten with wild terror, fleeing back overland to the Hellespont and hardly drawing breath till he reached Susa," the fact remained that Xerxes was personally in no jeopardy. Both the remnant of the Persian fleet, and the land-forces were yet too strong to overwhelm Greece. The only difficulty was to keep the army supplied with provision, particularly after the loss of the command over the sea due to the defeat sustained at Salamis. The Greek account of the fleeing Xerxes is more dramatic than real. The main reason for the retreat of Xerxes was the fear that the news of the defeat at Salamis might induce the Greeks of Ionia to revolt against Persia. It was also necessary for him to secure his line of retreat. There was, however, no intention of abandoning the conquest of Greece and while the Persian fleet was despatched to guard the bridge across Hellespont, Mardonius was left with the land-forces under him to complete the conquest of Greece. Mardonius sent a convoy of 60,000 soldiers to accompany Xerxes to Hellespont which later returned to join the main army at Thessaly conquering the towns of Olynthus and Potidaea.

*Greeks did
not follow
up their
victory*

The Greeks, however, did not follow up their victory despite Themistocles' advice. Themistocles tried to induce the naval commanders to follow up their advantage by sailing after the Persian fleet to the Hellespont, that they might deal it another blow and break down the bridge. If this were done, there was every chance of the Ionian Greeks revolting against Persia. But this was not to be, for Themistocles failed to get his advice adopted.

Liberated from the immediate presence of the enemy either on land or sea and passing from extreme terror to sudden ease and security the Athenians and the Peloponnesians indulged in full delight and self-congratulations of unexpected victory. In the division of the booty, the Aeginetans who were judged to have

distinguished themselves most in the battle were given the choice lot of the spoils. For bravery the Athenians were adjudged the second place. Prizes were also proposed for individuals for bravery or wisdom. Besides the first and the second prizes of valour the generals adjudicated among themselves the first and second prizes. They were to name two persons in order of merit and the story goes that every general put his own name for the first prize and that of Themistocles for the second. The result was that no first prize could be given and if first prize could not be given the second prize could not also be given. This disappointed Themistocles. He went shortly afterwards to Sparta, where he received from Lacedaemonians honours such as were never paid before or afterwards to any foreigner.

*Distribution
of spoils and
prizes*

Poet Aeschylus' remark that the defeat of the Persian sea-host was the defeat of the land-host proved true only for the time being. The Persian army retreated to Thessaly wintered there and in the spring were ready to attack Greece. Mardonius was in charge of the army. In the spring Artabazus and 60,000 troops that escorted Xerxes to Hellespont joined Mardonius. The total number of the Persian forces now in a posture to attack Greece, was perhaps 1,20,000. The real struggle for the freedom of Greece was about to begin (479 B.C.).

*Mardonius
ready to
attack Greece*

5/Plataea: There was a clear division of interest between the Athenians and the Peloponnesians. As before the Spartans were anxious not to operate beyond the Isthmus, if it could be avoided. On the other hand, the appearance of a strong Greek fleet on the coast Ionia and a second crushing victory over the Persian ships, would free the Peloponnesians of all apprehensions of a descent upon the Peloponnese, while their lines at Isthmus were beyond all fear of direct attack by land. The Athenians could free northern Greece of the presence of the Persian armies only by refusing to co-operate in a decisive operation at sea until a decisive blow had been struck on land.

*Divided
interest of the
Athenians
and the
Spartans*

*Mardonius
sends
Alexander
as his envoy
to Athens to
win her over*

Upon this division of interest between the Athenians and Peloponnesians Mardonius laid his plans. He made overtures to the Athenians through Alexander, King of Macedonia. While Alexander was at Athens, the Spartans apprehending that the Athenians might be won over by Xerxes' envoy. Alexander sent a mission there to prevent such an alliance between the Persians and the Athenians. Alexander addressed the Athenians the purport of which was that, if the Athenians would consent to enter into an alliance with the Persians the latter would be allowed to retain their country and its laws, add to their country from any other they may prefer. The Persian king would also in that case order the rebuilding of all the temples the Persians had burnt. The Spartan envoys sent to counteract the negotiations of Alexander addressed the Athenians in order to prevent them from allying themselves with the Persians which would have sealed the fate of whole Greece. The Athenians asked the Spartan envoys to wait and hear what they had to say to the Persian envoy. They declined the Persian offer saying 'Tell Mardonius that the Athenians say: so long as the sun moves in his present course, we will never come to terms with Xerxes'. To the Spartans, the Athenians said that there was not upon earth a quantity of gold, nor any country so rich or so beautiful, as to seduce us to take part with the Medes, or to act injuriously to the liberties of Greece.

*Athenians
firm in their
anti-Persian
attitude*

The embassy of Alexander should have strengthened the Greek league by making the Lacedaemonians all the more actively conscious of the importance of Athenian co-operation. The fear that Alexander's embassy engendered in Sparta gave the Athenians a greater opportunity to exert stronger pressure on the Lacedaemonians with a view to the defence of northern Greece. The Spartan envoys promised that an army should march to Boeotia. But selfishness characterised the Spartans and it needed special efforts on the part

of the Athenians to make them give up their selfish policy. As long as the Athenians had any expectation they stayed in Athens. But when they found that Spartans were careless to fulfil their promise particularly after they had completed the walling of the Isthmus, and that Mardonius was already in Boeotia, they understood that they had been deceived. The Spartans alleged in excuse the festival of the *Hyacinthia*, just as the year before they had pleaded the *Carnea*. Once again the Athenians had to leave their land with their families and effects, to Salamis. Mardonius this time reached Athens, without burning or harrying, and still hoping to win over the Athenians to the Persian side. But his offer of leaving Athens without any ravage, should the Athenians detach themselves from the Greek cause was treated with the same contempt as before. 'Even at this extremity, under the bitter disappointment of the ill-faith of their allies, the Athenians rejected the insidious propositions which were laid by an envoy before the Council of the Five Hundred at Salamis'. At the same time the Athenians, Megarans and Plataeans sent envoys to Lacedaemon to complain that the Spartans, instead of advancing with them to meet the barbarians in Boeotia, had allowed them to enter Athens, and to insist upon their marching an army at once to oppose Mardonius in Athens. It was backed by a threat that should the Spartans fail to redeem their promise of help there would be nothing for Athens and other states of northern Greece but to come to terms with the foe.

*Spartan
promise
of help*

*Mardonius
marches
with
Boeotia—
Spartans fail
to offer help
—Athens
evacuated*

*Mardonius
occupies
Athens
—His
overtures to
Athenian
—rejected*

*Athenians,
Megarans
and Plata-
eans send
embassies to
Lacedaemon*

Even in such circumstances of impending peril the Spartans out of their selfish, narrow and strictly Peloponnesian policy took ten days in answering the ambassadors and would have ultimately refused to render any help, but for the intervention of Chileos, a man of Tegea who addressed the Ephors as follows: "Things, O ephori, are thus circumstanced. If the Athenians, withdrawing from our alliance, shall unite with the Persians, strong as our wall on the Isthmus

*Spartan
selfishness*

*Intervention
of Chileos—
a man of
Tegea*

*Lacedaemonian
government
decides to
send help*

*Pausanias
at the
command of
the Greek
army*

*Mardonius
ravages
Athens and
withdraws
to Thebes*

*Mardonius
occupies the
strategic
position on
the Asopus*

may be, the enemy will still find an easy entrance into the Peloponnesus. Let us therefore hear them, before they do anything which may involve Greece in ruin."

The Lacedaemonian government ultimately changed its policy and despatched a force of 5000 Spartans, each attended by some Helots to northern Greece.

"Never perhaps before, did so large a body of Spartan citizens take the field at once. They were followed by 5000 Perioeci, each attended by one Helot." Pausanias was appointed to the command of the Spartan force. He was the regent for his child-cousin Pleistarchus, son of Leonidas, hero of Thermopylae. At the Isthmus the Spartan army was joined by the troops of the Peloponnesian as also the western Greek allies. The Greek army was further reinforced by the Megarians, and by 8000 Athenians and 600 Plataeans under the command of Aristides. The whole army of foot-soldiers numbered something very near 100,000, the task of leading which was entrusted to Pausanias.

Mardonius, hearing of the march of the Greek army, decided not to stay in Athens any longer. For, the fortress of Thebes, which was provided with abundant supplies of provisions, was the base of Mardonius. The fear of the line of communication being broken by the Greek army prompted Mardonius to withdraw from Athens after setting fire to Athens, and levelling to the ground whatever of the walls, buildings or temples still remained entire. He was induced to quit Athens also because the country was ill-adapted for cavalry and because in case of defeat he had no other means of escape but through straits where a handful of men might cut off his retreat. He, therefore, withdrew to Thebes so that he might have the advantage of fighting near a confederate city and in a country convenient for his cavalry. Mardonius stationed his army on the river Asopus which was the boundary between Thebes and Plataea, and destruction of Plataea was perhaps his object. The Persians had reasons to be sanguine about victory due to the

strategic position occupied by him, superiority of forces as also to the fact that they had a much abler general than any commander on the Greek side. Mardonius constructed fortification on the northern bank of the Asopus before the Greeks had crossed mount Cithaeron. His strategy was to fight a defensive battle by waiting for the Greeks to attack him so that he might reap the full advantage of his superiority in cavalry in a plain field. For the Greeks it would be advantageous if they could lure the Persians to fight them on the rugged terrain down the Cithaeron.

Mardonius' strategy of a defensive battle

As the Greeks did not descend on the plain, Mardonius sent whole of his cavalry against them under the command of Masistius. The left wing, guarded by the Megarians, was most vulnerable and the Persians did much damage here. The Megarians required succour. Pausanias wished to see if any of the Greeks would voluntarily offer themselves to take the post of the Megarians. All refused except a band of three hundred Athenians commanded by Olympiodorus. The day was changed when Masistius fell wounded from his horse and killed by a spear which pierced his eye, for his armour was impenetrable. Attempts to recover his body made by the Persians having proved unavailing, the Persians withdrew. According to Herodotus the Persian camp was filled with loud wailing and lamentation for the death of Masistius.

A preliminary skirmish

Masistius killed—Persians withdraw

The preliminary skirmish did not prove of any solid advantage to the Greek, nor did it inflict any serious injury to the Persians who continued to remain north of Asopus. For better water-supply the Greeks, realising that the Persians would not attack them in their present position, occupied the lower ground in the territory of Plataea, past the towns of Erythrae and Hysiae. As soon as the Greeks had left their first position, the Persian general occupied the roads behind and cut off the train which was on its way to supply the Greek army. Barring this, the Persian

Greek advance into lower ground

*Greek
withdrawal*

army persistently remained on the defensive. The Greeks remained practically inactive in this weak position harassed by the darts discharged by the Persian cavalry into their camp. The Persians finally succeeded in choking up the waters of the Gargaphia Spring from which the Greeks had their fresh water-supply. Thus circumstanced Pausanias held a war council which decided that the Greek army should fall back to a position between Hysiae and Plataea. The retreat was to have been effected at night but difference between Pausanias and Amompharetus delayed the march. Near about dawn Pausanias began his march leaving behind Amompharetus, but hoping that he would ultimately follow when he would find him deserted. It actually came true. But when in the morning Mardonius noticed that the Greeks had left their position, he decided to attack them. For now was the moment to attack when the Greek forces were moving in parts, thus divided, and not in battle array. Thus the Persians decided to fight the Greeks on a site of their enemy's choice, and disadvantageous to themselves. The real cause of the hasty decision to attack the enemy in a place of its own choice was a disastrous rivalry between Mardonius and his second in command, Artabazus, 'who in the ensuing battle did simply nothing, and probably desired that Mardonius should not win the glory of victory'.

*Mardonius
decides to
attack*

*Battle of
Plataea*

Mardonius despatched his cavalry to intercept the Lacedaemonians and this naturally compelled Pausanias to turn and withstand the Persian cavalry supported by the main Persian force under Mardonius. The Persian lances and arrows materially distressed the Grecian army and prevented any near approach. The battle raged hotly and the Lacedaemonians and Tegeates had borne the brunt of the day. The Persians seizing their adversaries' lances, broke them into pieces but did not discover any inferiority in their strength or courage. Yet so long as Mardonius was alive, the Persians in their attack and defence, conducted them

well and slew great numbers of the Spartans. But as soon as Mardonius was killed in action, the band which fought near his person and which was the flower of the Persian army was destroyed. After all, compared to the Greeks, their armour was inefficient, their attack without skill, and their inferiority in respect of discipline, conspicuous. 'Plataea, like Marathon', observes Munro (Camb. Anc. History, Vol. IV), 'was a tactical victory wrung from a strategic failure'. Mardonius had chosen the right moment to attack the Greeks when they had fallen apart, while on march, into three divisions and succeeded in frustrating the advance of the Greeks. From the point of strategy, he should have driven them back over mount Cithaeron in a headlong rout. But the steady discipline of the Spartans and the cool judgement of Pausanias at the precise moment saved the day. 'At close quarters the hoplites' armour and the Dorian spear soon decided the issue.'

*Mardonius
killed*

*Persian
inferiority*

*Tactical
victory*

The day was lost and all the rest of the Persian army turned and fled. The body of Mardonius was respected by Pausanias but it was mysteriously stolen, and none ever knew the hand that buried it. The slain Greek warriors, among whom was the brave Amompharetus, were buried before the gates of Plataea. The memory of the brave warriors was honoured by the Plataeans by holding a 'Feast of Freedom' (Festival of Eleutheria) every four years. Pausanias called the host together and in the name of the Spartans and all the confederacy guaranteed political independence to Plataea. Ten days after the battle Pausanias marched against Thebes the main city of Boeotia and demanded the surrender of the leaders who sided with the Persians. On their refusal to comply with Pausanias' demand siege was laid of the city and the leaders were surrendered to be executed at Corinth without trial. It must be mentioned here that the battle of Plataea was won simply and solely by the discipline of the Spartan hoplites and the plans of an able commander who had

*Political
independence
of Plataea
guaranteed*

*Thebes
attacked and
punished*

*Athenians
appear in
ill-light*

to oppose a commander abler than himself. The Athenians made no contribution to the victory and never in history, perhaps, did the Athenians appear in such ill-light. The later story invented by the Athenians to exalt themselves and disparage the Spartans has no historical veracity.

*Significance
and results
of the battle
of Plataea*

The battle of Plataea 'shares with Salamis the dignity of decisive battles in the world's history. Pindar a Theban poet calls Plataea and Salamis as the great triumphs of Sparta and Athens respectively, battles in which 'the Medes of the bent bows were sore afflicted'. Although the Lacedaemonians had to fight against heavy odds and particularly under the immense disadvantage of want of cavalry, they 'turned at Plataea a retreat into a victory'. One noteworthy fact about the battle was that it was decided by a small part of the army of either side. If the Athenians did not take part in the actual battle, on the Persian side Artabazus, second in command of Mardonius, had not entered into action at all with his forty thousand men. Death of Mardonius was the signal for the retreat of the remnant of the Persian army to the Hellespont. The greatest significance or effect of the battle was that never again was Persia to make any serious attempt against the liberty of European Greece. For the next century and a half dealings between Greece and Persia were confined within the western fringe of Asia and gradually the balance of power shifted so completely that Persia itself succumbed to Alexander of Macedon, a Greek. Greece achieved against the Persian monarchy what Persia failed to achieve against Greece. Another immediate effect of the Plataea was the achievement of the Hellenic fleet in the naval battle of Mycale which freed the Asiatic Greeks from the Persian yoke.

6/Mycale: On the same day as the battle of Plataea the Greeks won another victory on the Ionian coast at Mycale, east of Samos. The Greek fleet had been stationed at Delos on guard throughout the summer

under the command of Leotichidas. Xanthippus and the Athenians joined the fleet at Delos and this raised the total number of ships to about 250, according to Diodorus. It was the policy of the Athenians to remain inactive on the sea until a battle had been fought on land. For, they feared that a naval victory either for Greece or Persia would make the Spartans retreat from northern Greece. It was therefore as a measure of compelling the Spartans to help in the defence of northern Greece that the Athenians would not risk a naval battle until after a battle on land. But on the same day as the battle of Plataea the armament at Delos was drawn into action by a message from the Samians begging help against Persia and also promising an immediate revolt in Ionia, assuring the Greek admirals of the unseaworthy and helpless plight of the enemy's navy. Leotichidas accepted the proposal and concluded a treaty with them. Leotichidas sailed to the island of Samos and on his approach the Persian fleet withdrew to the cape Mycale where a large Persian army was already stationed. The Greeks landed; attacked, carried and burned the enemy's camp. Greek victory was made easy by the desertion of the Ionians who won their freedom as a result of the Greek victory, which was no less important than that at Plataea. After their defeat at Mycale the Persians retreated to Sardis.

*Battle of
Mycale*

*Easy Greek
victory due to
Ionian
desertion*

On their return to Samos from Mycale the victorious Grecian fleet, having full confidence in their power of defending the Ionian islands admitted the Chians, Samians, Lesbians and other islanders hitherto subjects of Persia to the protection and reciprocal engagements of their alliance. The Spartans were anxious to go home and to limit their liabilities overseas by leaving Asia to the Persians. The Athenians, however, were not willing to abandon their Ionian kinsmen and other Greeks who were now committed to their cause. The Spartan proposal to transplant the Ionian population to Greece was also not acceptable to the Athenians,

*Difference
among the
Spartans and
the Athenians
regarding the
future of the
Asiatic
Greeks*

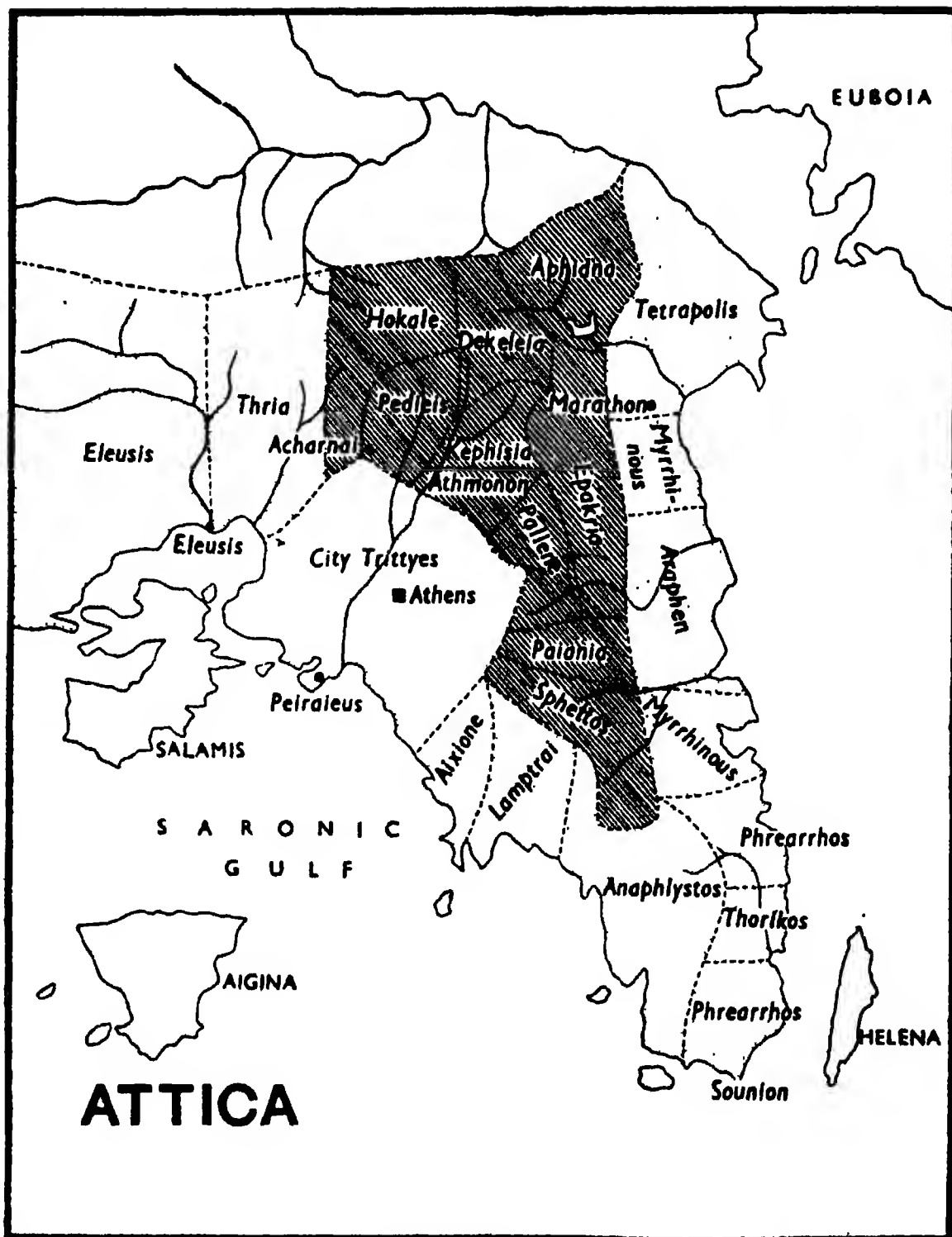
*Athens
undertakes
the protection
of the Ionian
Greeks and
of freeing
those yet
under Persia
—Steps
towards
confederacy
of Delos and
Athenian
empire*

for they were not willing to permit the colonies originally planted by themselves should be abandoned, thus abandoning the metropolitan dignity of Athens. The Lacedaemonians readily acquiesced in this objection and were glad to wriggle out of a situation leaving the onerous responsibility of freeing and protecting the Asiatic Greeks to the Athenians. The first step was thus taken, which gave Athens a separate ascendancy and separate duties in duties to the Asiatic Greeks, and for introducing first, the confederacy of Delos—next, Athenian maritime empire.

*Expedition
to Helles-
pont: Return
of the
Spartans*

From Samos the Greek fleet, chiefly at the instance of the Athenians, sailed northward for the purpose of breaking down the bridge Xerxes had set up across the Hellespont. On their arrival at Abydos, they learned of the destruction of the Xerxian bridge. Leotichidas and the Spartans returned home forthwith but Xanthippus with the Athenian squadron remained to expel the Persians from the Thracian Chersonese. This peninsula had been, in great part, an Athenian possession for more than forty years but during the Persian hatred towards Athens, particularly when Xerxes was ascendant, no Athenian citizen would find it a safe place to live in. Xanthippus was naturally eager to regain the properties of the Athenian citizens in the Chersonese. Cimon, son of Miltiades had extensive properties there to recover. To these, there was yet another motive for attacking Chersonese—namely, its importance as a corn-producing area and of a clear passage through the Hellespont for the corn-ships from the Propontis to Athens and Aegina. Xanthippus laid siege of Sestos, the strongest place in the peninsula, and the centre of the neighbouring Persian garrisons. The Greek inhabitants of the Chersonese readily joined the Athenians in expelling the Persians who were taken by surprise. After some length of the siege, the stock of provisions in the town ran out and famine began to make itself felt. The garrison nevertheless held out till the patience of the besiegers

*Xanthippus
lays siege of
Sestos*



[facing page 71]

was nearly exhausted. It was with difficulty that the Athenian leaders had to repress the clamorous desire of the Athenians to return to Athens. However, the privations of the garrison became intolerable and Sestos was captured after which the Athenian fleet returned home with their plunder. Capture of Sestos, like the victory at Mycale, was a step further in the foundation of the Athenian empire.

*Capture of
Sestos
478 B.C.*

CHAPTER 4

Sparta and Athens : Pausanias and Themistocles

*Differences
began to be
manifest*

1/Differences Between Allies Manifest Themselves : After liberation Greece heaved a sigh of relief. But victory too has its problems, the war still continued, while the removal of immediate pressure occasioned the differences between the allies and between individuals to manifest themselves more starkly.

*Athenians
return home*

After Mycale and Sestos the Athenians brought home their women and children and all the movables they had saved from the enemy. They now began preparations for rebuilding their city and walls much of which had been razed to the ground. Most of the houses except those were used by the Persian grandees had been demolished by the Persians. But Sparta incited by Aegina and Corinth, both thoroughly afraid of the naval power of Athens, sent an embassy to Athens to dissuade them from fortifying their town on the plea that fortified town outside Peloponnesus might be of great advantage to the enemy if he would choose to come again and that Peloponnesus itself was the best citadel for whole of Greece. "It is difficult to understand" remarks A. Holm "the presentation of a demand of this kind to a free state, but it shows that Sparta regarded Athens as a member of her league." Themistocles got rid of the embassy by promising to confer with the Spartans on their suggestion. He himself went to Sparta but declined to begin talk till his colleagues had arrived. There was unaccountable delay in their arrival and the time was used for rebuilding the Athenian walls. But this could not be kept secret although Themistocles dismissed the rumour of the rebuilding of the Athenian wall as sheer nonsense and prevailed over the Spartans to send some

*Rebuilding
of Athenian
wall objected
to be Sparta*

responsible men to find out the truth. Some observers were sent to Athens. In the meanwhile Aristides came over to Sparta and informed Themistocles that the wall was now high enough to be defensive. The Spartan observers were detained till the safe return of Themistocles, Aristides and others to Athens. Themistocles now confessed all and politely told the Spartans that they must in future consider Athens taking her own decisions and they left. All this was Themistocles' plan. The Spartans pocketed their pride and said that they meant well and still remained friendly to the Athenians.

*Themistocles' plan—
rebuilding
of wall
completed*

2/Why Sparta Failed to be an Imperial Power :

Her petty provincialism : Meanwhile the course of Grecian affairs entered upon a new and unexpected way. For forty years past, Sparta was the most predominant power in the Continental Greece and had been the head of Peloponnesian League, and intervened with effect in Greek affairs beyond the limits of Peloponnesus. Her leadership was unhesitatingly recognised during common resistance to Persia. Her admirals were in main command of the allied navy at Salamis and Mycale. Her king Leonidas earned glory though in defeat at Thermopylae. At Plataea her general and spearmen earned a decisive victory. It would not have been anything unexpected to find Sparta which was universally acknowledged, before the Persian wars, to be the leading state of Greece. "A great national enterprise conducted under her auspices to a splendid conclusion, must immensely increase the moral strength of her position, and might justly stimulate her ambition; moral power, by dexterous management can soon be converted into material strength; in short, after the battle of Plataea, the Greek world seemed to lie at Sparta's feet." But Sparta had neither the means nor the Spartan government the brains or spirit to create the means of carrying out an imperial policy. The geographical and commercial conditions of Greece determined the imperial

*Leadership
of Sparta*

Her exploits

*Weakness of
Sparta and
Spartans*

policy in Greece, and no power could aspire to a truly imperial position without being a sea power. After the liberation of the Asiatic Greeks and those of the eastern Aegean from the Persian yoke Sparta could not expect to spread her influence unless she became a sea power. Even if she could retain her continental position, her power was certain to be eclipsed by any power which could spread her influence upon the island and coasts of the Aegean.

*Spartans too
conservative
to adapt to
new condi-
tions*

The Spartans lacked the genius of adapting themselves to new conditions. Their character, spirit, their city and the constitutions were survivals from 'medieval Greece'. Their conservatism was traditional and naturally reforms were out of question. Even men of exceptional ability were looked upon with suspicion. Their genius lay in the drilling of land-forces, building up of a navy was an idea chimerical to them. During the entire course of the Persian war they repeatedly betrayed a narrow, provincial outlook. They almost invariably acted at the last moment. They never showed any initiative, on the contrary, their interests having been strictly Peloponnesian they more than once almost betrayed the national cause. "Failing to share in the progress of Greece, utterly wanting in the imperial instinct and the quality of imagination which accompanies it, the city of Lacedaemon was not marked out to achieve a political union of the Hellenic states. She was, however, able to prevent a rival from achieving it; but not before that rival had completely thrown her into the shade."

*Betrayal of
national
interests*

*Lack of
imperial
instincts*

3/Role of Athens in the Persian War : In contradistinction to the petty, selfish policy of the Spartans the Athenians all throughout the course of the Persian war followed a truly Pan-Hellenic policy and suffered greatly for the common cause.

At the time of the Ionian revolt, it was Athens that sided with the Asiatic Greeks while Sparta refused to render any help. It may be said that the Athenian

part in the burning of Sardis kindled the wrath of the Persian king and the Hellas had to pay for it. But it must be remembered that the Persian imperial policy would not have left European Greeks outside its purview and if Athens only hastened the process by joining in the Ionian revolt she not only suffered most for it but also worked for the defence of the whole of Greece and when Sparta would not move for the liberation of the Greeks who were still under the Persian yoke after the battle of Mycale, Athens continued to fight with the Persians till every Asiatic Greek had earned his freedom.

*Pan-Hellenic
subservied by
Athens*

In the battle of Marathon, the Athenians had to fight single handed against the host of the Persians, for the Spartans failed to send in their promised help on the plea of the festival of Carnea and when they actually did, the battle had already been fought and won chiefly due to the pluck and courage of Miltiades.

*Athenians
fought single-
handed at
Marathon*

When the Persians repeated their attack Sparta came forward with help but kept the command both of the land-forces and the navy to themselves although it was Athens who had contributed the largest number of ships to the common naval force. It was however due to the Athenian insistence that the Spartans did not withdraw to the Isthmus of Corinth which to their mind was the most convenient point of defence for Sparta and the Peloponnesus. The defeat of the Greeks at Thermopylae led to the Persian occupation of Athens. The Athenians had to withdraw from the city with their women and children to the island of Salamis where it was due to a stratagem of Themistocles that the Greek could win a signal naval victory. The Spartan naval commanders were willing to withdraw to the Isthmus after the battle of Artemisium. This would mean leaving the northern states like Athens, Megara, Aegina, etc., to the mercy of the Persians. It was Themistocles who by having recourse to a stratagem forced a battle on the Greeks in the narrow strait of Salamis and won the day. Salamis bay was

*Narrow
Peloponne-
sian policy
of Sparta,
countered by
Athens*

*Themistocles'
stratagem:
Victory at
Salamis*

suitable for the light and comparatively small ships of the Greeks but most disadvantageous for the large ships of the Persians. The result was, as Themistocles anticipated, a heavy loss to the Persians.

*Athenians
forced
Sparta to
render help:
Athens
withstands
tempting
overtures by
Persia*

The next attempt on Greece by Persia was preceded by an overture to the Athenians. But the Athenians rejected it with contempt, for as the Athenians declared no amount of gold or territory could seduce the Athenians on to the Persian side. But while the Athenians were prepared to face the enemy the Spartans were delaying the promised help. It was this delay that compelled the Athenians to withdraw to Salamis once again with their women and children and Mardonius occupied the city. But Mardonius' expectation of winning over Athens to his side proved false and he withdrew. But the Spartans had to be forced by Themistocles to come forward in support of Athens by giving out that he would otherwise join hands with the Persians and in that event Peloponnesus would not be saved. The battle of Plataea that followed ended in Greek victory. This was followed by a Greek victory at Mycale which freed the Asiatic Greeks from the Persian yoke. Here also the policy of Athenians was to remain inactive at sea until a battle had been fought on land. 'For a naval victory would probably have meant the retreat of the Spartans from the northern Greece, on the calculation that the enemy would not attack Peloponnesus without the co-operation of the fleet.'

*Athens
follows
Pan-Hellenic
policy*

The subsequent conduct of Athens was consistent with her Pan-Hellenic policy. She fought against the Persians up to the battle of Eurymedon which freed the last Greek from the Persian yoke. The reward of Athenian policy was to be seen in the growth of the Athenian empire and the eventual subjugation of the Persian empire itself by Alexander, a Macedonian Greek.

4/**Pausanias** : Pausanias, son of Cleombrotus

became the regent of his child-cousin Pleistarchus son of Leonidas, the hero of Thermopylae. He was a man of remarkable military ability who showed his worth in the battle of Plataea where he had to oppose an abler general than himself. But as Prof. Bury remarks, his talents as a politician were not equal to his talents as a general. He leapt into fame at Plataea and soon it was noticed that he was like Miltiades, another instance of the liability of the Grecian leading men to be spoiled by success. As conqueror of Plataea he had acquired a renown unparalleled in Grecian experience together with a prodigious share of the plunder: concubines, horses, camels, gold-plate, which were well calculated to make the sobriety and discipline of Spartan life irksome. But the irony of the situation was that, while his power was great on foreign command, it became subordinate to that of the ephors when he returned home. His newly acquired insolence was manifest soon after the battle of Plataea. In the commemorative golden tripod dedicated by him to the temple of Delphi he caused an inscription describing himself as 'commander of the Greeks and destroyer of the Persians'. It was a tall, unseemly boast to which the Spartans themselves objected and got the inscription erased. Needless to say, Pausanias' discontent was great.

*Pausanias
as general
at Plataea*

His insolence

Nevertheless, Pausanias was appointed to command the allied fleet by the Spartans, to emancipate the eastern Greeks from the Persian yoke. Twenty ships from various cities of Peloponnesus were placed under him. Athens alone furnished thirty ships under Aristides and Cimon. Other triremes also came from the Ionian and insular allies.

*Appointed
to command
allied fleet*

Pausanias first sailed to Cyprus in which island he liberated most of the Grecian cities from the Persians. He next turned to the Bosphorus of Thrace and undertook the siege of Byzantium which was a post of great strength and importance, occupied by a considerable Persian force with several leading Persians and also

*Many cities
of Cyprus
taken*

kinsmen of Xerxes. The line of communication between Greece and the Euxine (Black Sea) was thus cleared of obstruction. It was on the capture of this latter place that Pausanias' ambition and discontent ripened into distinct treason. He connived at the escape of some kinsmen of Xerxes. He entered into negotiations with Xerxes suggesting that he had released the Persian captives to please the Persian king and if it would please the latter, he would marry his daughter; and bring under Persian dominion both Sparta and the rest of Greece. In imagination Pausanias saw himself already the Satrap of Greece. Xerxes highly pleased with Pausanias immediately sent down Artabazus to supersede Megabates with a view to actively furthering the project of Pausanias.

*Pausanias
at Byzantium: His
Medism*

*His boundless
ambition*

Throughout the whole course of the expedition to Cyprus and Byzantium, Pausanias had been insolent and domineering, treating the allies shabbily compared to the Spartans. But on receipt of the communication from Xerxes and supplied with funds for corruption, Pausanias' insane hopes knew no bounds and he started behaving as if he had already become the son-in-law of Xerxes and despot of the Hellas. He behaved more as a tyrant than as a general and ruined all chances of his country's remaining the head of the Greek confederacy which the Persian invasion had called into being. His haughty reserve, with uncontrolled burst of wrath, rendered him unapproachable. The exasperated eastern Greeks in the circumstances placed themselves under the protection and headship of Athens. This was inevitable, for Athens being a maritime power was naturally marked out for the leadership in the prosecution of war beyond the sea.

*Aegean and
Asiatic
Greeks come
under
Athenian
leadership*

*Recall of
Pausanias*

Fortunately for Greece Pausanias' treasonable plans were not deliberately laid and veiled until ripe for execution but manifested with childish impatience. Being a small man and elated by vanity, he was unable to refrain from betraying, in little things, his treacherous designs. Reports of his doings aroused anxiety

and alarm in Sparta and he was recalled to answer for his conduct, and seemingly the Spartan vessels with him.

Lack of positive proof of his Persian intrigue led to his acquittal on this count, he was punished only for some acts of injury which he had done to particular persons. Yet he was mistrusted by the Spartans who sent out Dorcis to supersede him as commander. But a revolution of immense importance for Greece had already taken place in the minds of the allies. The headship was in the hands of Athens, and Dorcis the Spartan found the allies not disposed to recognise his authority. The Spartan government made no further attempt to win back the allegiance which the Aegean and the Asiatic Greeks had transferred to Athens.

*His
supersession*

Pausanias was an instance of the fate of an ambitious man who had neither the preliminary education necessary to enable him to feel at home in an important position which was not of his own seeking, nor sufficient sagacity and strength of character to supply the defect. In fact, Spartan training was not calculated to fit people for a career among luxurious barbarians and a man of the stamp of Pausanias lost his head when brought in contact with them.

*Prey to the
lure of
luxury:
Weakness of
character*

5/Spartan attempt at forming a Continental Empire : Sparta now began to make attempts at extending power on the main land and forming a continental federation. Sparta now cast her eyes upon Thessaly in the hope of forming a Lacedaemonian empire on the basis of the Amphictyonic league of northern Greece. An army was sent forth under king Leotychides who could have easily subjugate Thessaly but for his falling a prey to the lure of gold and silver. He was easily bribed and the Princes of the Thessalian states saved their power. His guilt was evident and when he returned home he was tried and condemned to death. Sparta perhaps made some influence in Thessaly but her

*Leotychides
lured by gold
and silver*

*Spartan
attempt to
annex
Amphictyonic
League
thwarted by
Themistocles*

attempt at reorganising the Amphictyonic league did not prosper. She now thought of expelling Thebes and Thessaly for their siding with the Persians during the Persian war, as also Argos who did nothing of the kind, from the Amphictyonic league and to annex the league to Sparta. But the Spartan design was thwarted by Themistocles who represented Athens on the league.

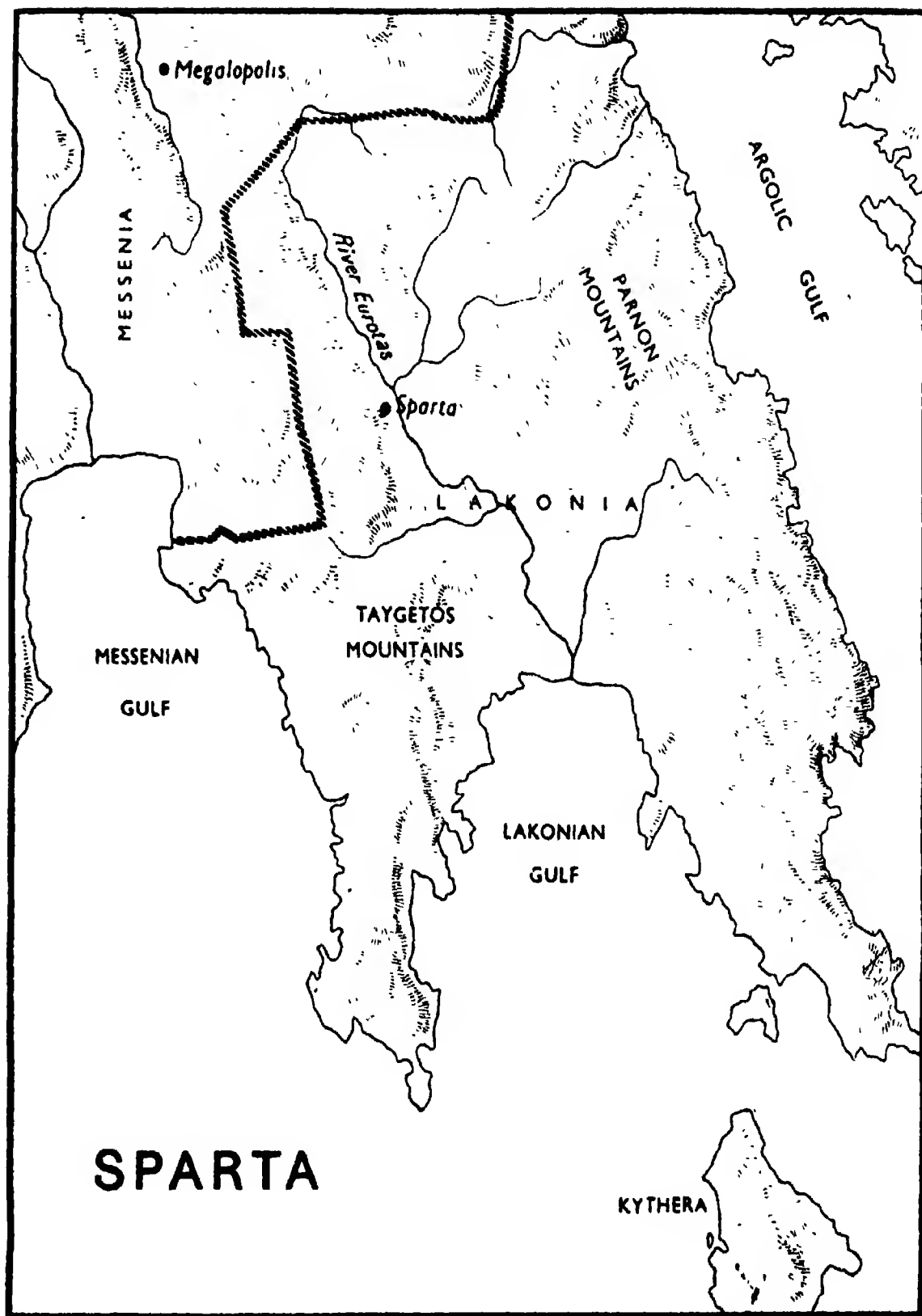
*Sparta had
to contend
for her
position in
Peloponnesus
itself*

After her attempt at annexing Amphictyonic league, Sparta had to contend for her position within Peloponnesus itself and naturally all ideas to prosecute any further plan of empire building beyond her own peninsula. Argos which recovered Tiryns as also her strength began to support the Arcadian cities in a combination against the power of Sparta. Argos allied herself with Tegea but the joint forces were defeated by the Spartans outside the walls of Tegea but the city could not be taken. Soon after this the Arcadian cities formed a league against Sparta and all except Matineans joined hands with her. But on this occasion Argos did not send any help. At Dipaea Sparta defeated the combination and Tegea was forced to submit. It was due to the energy of the young king Archidamus that Sparta succeeded in maintaining her position but still there were grave causes of anxiety. Elis became a city with a democratic constitution was a danger for Sparta in the west; a regenerated Argos was a danger in the east, and even in Arcadia the Mantinean villages had to be recognised as democratic communities, although reluctantly, because Mantinea remained aloof from the Arcadian league.

*Danger for
the future
on all sides*

*Sparta
destined to
remain in
Peloponnesian
groove*

Sparta thus failed to strike out a new path and the Persian war and her exploits in it left Sparta very much in the same place as she had been before. Her prestige instead of being enhanced, diminished and it became clear that she was destined to remain within the Peloponnesian groove while Athens was proceeding along the path of imperialism in rapid strides.



[facing page 81]

6/Themistocles : Themistocles, son of Neocles, emerged as a new figure in the history of Greece during the initial stage of the Persian war; he belonged to the mercantile class of Athens, not a noble masquerading as popular champion, but a commoner drawn from the ranks. Son of obscure parents, he did not receive the education of well-bred gentlemen, for he lacked the accomplishment of playing the harp which was norms in all well-bred gentlemen in Athens. But he practised the study of rhetoric and associated with professional teachers of Political Science since his boyhood. He belonged to a new age and new type and his appearance in the forefront of Politics, hitherto the monopoly of the nobles, was a striking symptom of the swift democratic evolution in Athens. To the problems of state, he brought not merely fresh outlook, but also singularly fertile initiative and resourcefulness. Holm calls him 'one of Greece's greatest men'. He did good service to his country and did never injure it. He was a statesman of the first order and Athens owed a new direction of policy to his imaginative foresight. Thucydides speaks with enthusiasm of his acuteness and foresight, his power of persuading others, his ability to guide others through the intricacies of diplomacy, his never failing resourcefulness in every political emergency. He paved the path of the future ascendancy of Athens and devised the means of the salvation of Greece in her struggle with Persia. It was Themistocles who made Athens a sea power. The pre-eminent importance of his statesmanship was due, in the first place, to his insight in discerning the potentialities of Athens as a state, and in the second place, to his grasping her situation before any one else had grasped it, and in the third place, to his energy in initiating, his adroitness and perseverance in following a policy which alone could raise the city of Athens to the position she attained. Before Themistocles Athens was a considerable naval power, but the navy was considered subordinate to the land-forces. But it was the foresight of Themistocles that made

Character

*His foresight
and states-
manship*

Athens sacrifice army to the navy and make Athens the greatest sea-state in Greece. This bold policy had to be carried out by Themistocles in the face of opposition.

His services

Already in 493 B.C. he had begun a scheme whereby a new rock-guarded harbour, which was infinitely safer than the broad sandy bay of Phaleron then in use, should be developed at Piræus. It was due to the Persian War that the work was delayed. In 487 when Athens went to war against Aegina, the strongest naval power of the time, she had to appeal to Corinth for help. But despite Corinthian help, Athens was worsted in battle and suffered much from raids on their coasts. This made Themistocles think of expanding the Athenian navy. In 482 when a rich deposit of silver ore was discovered at Laurium and the Athenian government decided to distribute the proceeds to all citizens, Themistocles proposed that the newly discovered wealth should be used for the construction of ships and in a couple of years two hundred galleys had been put into commission. This gave the Athenian navy the strength that it displayed in the war with Persia. When the Athenians returned home after the battle of Plataea, Athens was a heap of ruins. Themistocles suggested the building up of a new city by the sea, using the old city as a quarry for materials. But was not to be. His first care was then to fortify Athens on a scale hitherto unknown in Greece. The new wall was to have a circuit of six miles. It was probably the scale of rebuilding that roused the jealousy and fears of the Peloponnesians. The fortifications, the ships and the terrible activity of the Athenians might well seem evidence of a dangerous ambition. Sparta therefore sent envoys to dissuade Athens from raising the fortifications. It was Themistocles who dismissed the envoys with the reply that Athens would send an embassy to Sparta to discuss the issue. Next, he went to Sparta as an advance party and the delay in the arrival of the

*His
stratagem*

other members of the embassy, which was a contrivance of Themistocles himself, was used in completing the wall to a defensive height. When Aristides came to Sparta and secretly gave out to Themistocles this intelligence, Themistocles confessed this to the Spartans. Safe return of Themistocles and others was also accomplished by another stratagem. Themistocles had earlier induced the Spartans to send envoys to Athens to see for themselves that the Athenians were not building the wall. These envoys were used as hostages for the return of Themistocles and his company.

Earlier, Themistocles had taken part in the battle of Marathon, and although he held no post of command, was destined to hold a higher place in the Athenian history than any of his fellow warriors.

*Warrior at
Marathon*

Before the battle of Artemisium the Greek commanders cowed by the numerical superiority of the Persian ships, wanted to retreat but were restrained by Themistocles. Likewise after the capture of Athens by the Persians the Greek generals held a council of war and majority decided to withdraw to the Isthmus of Corinth and there to await the Persian attack. This would mean leaving Athens, Megara and Aegina to their fate. At this crucial moment it was Themistocles who by a stratagem forced the Greeks to fight against the Persian fleet at Salamis and won a signal victory. Themistocles who was a believer in Pan-Hellenism would not fall a victim to the lure of gold offered by Mardonius when he occupied Athens for a second time. "Tell Mardonius that the Athenians say: so long as the sun moves in his present course, we will never come to terms with Xerxes"—expressed essentially the view point of Themistocles. It was due to the opposition of Themistocles again that the Spartan attempt at converting the Amphyctyonic league into a Spartan empire was thwarted.

*His Pan-
Hellenism*

But this man of genius was not without weaknesses. Although his cupidity did not go to the extent of

*His
weaknesses*

betraying the interest of his country, yet like most Greek statesmen, he was accessible to bribes and he could not show any ostensible source of his wealth. He was also to some extent vain, and it was his vanity that betrayed him into committing Public indiscretions. His building of a shrine near his house for "Artemis wisest in Council was a memorial to the wise counsels he had given to his country." Such little this made him unpopular and gave a handle to his opponents against him. Appeal was made to ostracism and the popular verdict was against Themistocles and he was exiled. In Argos where he took his abode in exile he unleashed a severe anti-Athenian propaganda in Peloponnesus. The Athenians linked the name of Themistocles with Pausanias when the latter's Persian intrigues were revealed. Although it was least likely that Themistocles was a party to the intrigue, he was accused of high treason and escorts were sent to arrest him and bring him to trial. Themistocles fled to Corcyra but the Corcyraeans would not give him asylum. He crossed over to Epirus but there also he was pursued by Spartan and Athenian officials. Ultimately he found protection under Admetus, king of the Molossians. The latter refused to hand him over to his pursuers. The Athenians disappointed in getting him, condemned him as a traitor and confiscated his property and impounded the citizenship of his successors. Later on Themistocles went to the court of Artaxerxes, son of Xerxes, where he intrigued like Pausanias to undo the services he rendered to Greece. By a strange irony of fate the hero of Salamis like Pausanias, the hero of Plataea was driven to follow similar course. But Prof. Bury remarks: "It may well have been, however, that Themistocles, who was an able and far-sighted statesman, merely intended to compass his own advantage at the expense of the Great King and had no serious thought of carrying out any designs against Greece." He won honour at Persia and was appointed governor of Magnesia where he died and buried out the wall of the city. Many

*His
ostracism
and exile*

*His
intrigues
with Persia*

*His death in
Magnesia*

years afterwards there was a false story current in Athens according to which Themistocles committed suicide at Magnesia.

7/**Aristides:** 'In complete contrast to Themistocles stood Aristides, whose reputation for spotless integrity was expressed in the epithet of 'the just', which was always applied to him. Thucydides expresses no opinion about him, but the verdict of Herodotus is that he was the best and most upright Athenian of his age.' Aristides was one of the three most progressive democratic statesmen, the other two being Xanthippus and Themistocles. These leaders had separate policies and parties but it was the rhetoric of later age that was responsible for stressing the sharpness of the antithesis between Aristides and Themistocles particularly. The writers of later age would have us believe that because Themistocles was an innovator, Aristides must have been a conservative, because the former was a democrat, the latter must have been of aristocratic or oligarchic views. But as Holm points out, 'It was the choice of means in the widest sense of the word, the method of making use of circumstances, which alone really separated the two men (Themistocles and Aristides), and not their political aims, in which they were agreed.' While the policy of Aristides was to develop the Athenian Hoplites, that of Themistocles was conversion of Athens into a naval power. By 485 B.C. Themistocles was successful in overriding all opposition to his policy. In 484 B.C. Xanthippus was ostracised and two years later Aristides was silenced by the same means.

*A progressive
democratic
Statesman*

*Contrast
between
Themistocles
and
Aristides*

Ostracised

In 480 B.C. as whole of Greece was preparing for the defence of the country, minor political disagreements were forgotten. Aristides and Xanthippus, driven into exile by ostracism, were recalled and chosen as generals along with their great rival Themistocles. The rivalry of Themistocles and Aristides had been greatly appeased by the invasion of Xerxes which had imposed upon both the peremptory necessity of

His recall

*Commands
Athenian
fleet at
Salamis*

co-operation against a common enemy and both held prominent posts and rendered effective service. Themistocles stood forth as the contriver of the city wall and architect of Piraeus as also the dreamer of an Athenian naval empire, Aristides became one of the commander of the Athenian fleet at Salamis and was the first organiser of the confederacy of Delos.

*Destroys
Persian
troops at
Psyttalea*

In the battle of Salamis Aristides commanded a part of the Greek navy and it was through him the news reached the wrangling Greek generals whether they should give fight in the narrow strait of Salamis or withdraw to the Isthmus. When the battle was almost lost to the Persians Aristides carried over some Grecian Hoplites to the island of Psyttalea and destroyed all those Persians troops who had landed before the battle.

*Saves
government
against a
conspiracy*

Aristides also saved government from the conspiracy of some Athenian citizens of noble families who seeing themselves ruined by the Persian War and that they had lost their credit and influence hatched up a conspiracy to destroy the popular government of Athens. When this conspiracy had already made some progress, it was discovered to Aristides. He at once arrested eight of the conspirators, of these two most guilty were immediately proceeded against, but they contrived to escape. The rest he dismissed telling them a battle should be the great tribunal to determine their sincere and good intentions to their country.

*Command a
contingent of
8,000 at
Plataea*

In the battle of Plataea Aristides commanded an army 8,000 strong. Similar confidence in his generalship was placed when thirty ships were put under the orders of Aristides and Cimon in an Asiatic expedition after the battle of Plataea, under the overall command of Pausanias. In this expedition the conduct of Aristides which was both just and conciliating towards the Ionian Greeks that formed a part of the expeditionary force, did much to bring the Ionians under the Athenian leadership in preference to that of Sparta whose commander Pausanias was haughty and oppressive

*Aristides'
conciliatory
attitude
wins the
Ionians*

towards them. It was Aristides along with Cimon that dismissed the Lacedaemonian admiral and drove Pausanias away from Byzantium and completed the Persian power, still formidable and created an organised a confederacy as yet only inchoate. It has been remarked that "It had been the good fortune of Athens to profit by the genius of Themistocles on two critical occasions namely the battle of Salamis and the rebuilding of her wall, where sagacity, craft, and decision were required, it was no less her good fortune now in the delicate business of assessing a new and determining how much each state should bear, without precedent to guide them, to have Aristides of unimpeachable honesty to perform the task." This was indeed a good fortune, for when the Athenians sent Aristides on the expedition to free the Asiatic Greeks, they could not anticipate that any such duty as assessment of the tax on the members of the confederacy of Delos would devolve on him. Aristides' assessment found favour not only at the time when it was done but was remembered with fondness even when Athens had degenerated into an unpopular empire.

*Expels
Pausanias
from
Byzantium*

*Athens
fortunate in
having
Aristides*

Aristides died three or four years after the ostracism (471 B.C.) of Themistocles, i.e. either in 469 or 468 B.C. Plutarch refers to three contradictory accounts of Aristides' death. One affirmed that Aristides dies on foreign service in the Euxine Sea, according to a second, he died at home amidst universal esteem and grief of his fellow-citizens; according the third account he was falsely accused of bribe taking and condemned to a fine of fifty *minae* (about £180) and having been unable to pay the fine he was compelled to retire to Ionia where he died. Plutarch however rejects this version of his death outright, except the portion that Aristides died very poor.

His death

*Plutarch's
opinion*

Aristides was greatly admired by poet Aeschylus and in one of his tragedies under the name of an ancient hero he painted Aristides with a truth which was immediately recognised by the audience.

*Poet
Aeschylus'
administra-
tion*

CHAPTER 5

Confederacy of Delos

*Pausanias'
conduct helps
Athens to the
leadership*

*Legitimacy
of Athen's
claim to
maritime
leadership*

*Athens in
possession of
command*

1/Origin of the Confederacy : Pausanias' *medism* and his flagrant conduct led to his recall and trial but he was acquitted by the Spartans, yet mistrusting his conduct in reference to his collusion with the enemy, they sent out Dorcis to supersede him as commander. 'But a revolution, of immense importance for Greece, had taken place in the minds of the allies. The headship, or hegemony, was in the hands of Athens, and Dorcis the Spartan found the allies not disposed to recognise his authority.' All this was due to the insolent and domineering attitude of Pausanias who while commanding the Greek expedition against Cyprus and Byzantium which were under Persia, treated the allies in most offensive manner which the Greek warriors could not tolerate. On the contrary, the soft and conciliatory conduct of the Athenian generals who joined the expedition, Aristides and Cimon, won respect of the Ionians who also were in the expeditionary force. Even before the battle of Salamis, we have on the evidence of Herodotus, the question of the advisability of giving Athens command of the fleet was raised. But the proposal had not been well received by the allied states, and the Athenians waved their claim in the interest of the national survival.

Now when Pausanias was summoned to Sparta, he left no authority behind him to represent his command. Even the Spartan small squadron accompanied him home. This offered the Athenian generals the best opportunity for ensuring to themselves and exercising that command which the allies also now wanted them to undertake. So effectively were the Athenians in possession of the command that when Dorcis, the Spartan general came to replace Pausanias, he was

compelled to return home. This was the first open renunciation of the Spartan authority as presiding state among the Greeks. This was indeed the first separation of Greece into two distinct camps each with collective interests and projects of its own. The tendency of the Spartan leaders to become corrupt on foreign service, as in the cases of Pausanias and king Leotychides, weighed much in inducing the Spartans to abandon the Asiatic headship to Athens. Prosecution of war for the liberation of the Greeks who were yet under Persia and the protection of those who had already been emancipated were left to Athens. The sympathies of the Peloponnesians still clung to Sparta while those of the Ionian Greeks had turned to Athens.

*Open
renunciation
of Spartan
headship*

The new situation imposed upon the Athenian generals the duty of organising the new confederacy which they had been chosen to conduct. There was, however, no idea when the expedition started that such a responsibility would devolve on them. 'The Ionic allies were at this time not merely willing and unanimous, but acted as the forward movers in the enterprise; for they stood in obvious need of protection against the attacks of Persia, and had no further kindness to expect from Sparta of the Peloponnesians.' Even if the Ionians had been less under the pressure of necessity, the conduct of Athens and of Aristides as representative of Athens would have sufficed to bring them into a union with Athens. Aristides, their new leader was no less equitable to the confederacy than energetic against the common enemy.

*Athens
organises
Ionian
confederacy*

2/Organisation of the Confederacy : The objects which the confederacy was to observe were: *First*, to prosecute war against Persia and to free the Asiatic Greeks who were yet under the Persian yoke. *Secondly*, to render protection to the Greeks of Ionia against Persian attack and reconquest, for, individually none of the Ionian states had any possibility of defending itself. *Thirdly*, 'to devastate the country of the Great

Objects

King, in order to obtain by rapine a set-off against the expenses and losses of the war.'

*Delos seat of
the confederacy*

The maritime league formed with Athens at the head, in 477 B.C., was named confederacy of Delos. It was here in the temple of Apollo and Artemis, in the island of Delos, that the treasury of the confederacy was established, and the meetings of the synods were to be held. The general conditions of the confederacy were regulated in a common synod of members, appointed to meet periodically for deliberative purposes, at Delos—of old the venerated spot for religious festivals of the Ionic cities, and at the same time a convenient centre for the members of the confederacy. The choice of the sacred island of Delos was dictated by considerations of Ionic sentiment as much as of convenience, "and at any rate it served to throw into relief that common Ionian kinship on which the league was originally based".

*No written
constitution
nor precise
terms*

There was no written document laying down the constitution of the confederacy nor expressed in any precise terms. 'It was more in the nature of a treaty of alliance, to which there were two parties: Athens on one side, and the Allies on the other.' Oaths were exchanged between parties for an offensive and defensive alliance, solemnised by throwing of lumps of iron into the sea symbolic of the strength of the alliance till iron would float to the top. As to the character of the confederacy of Delos, it may be remarked that it was 'a voluntary union of independent allies' each having an equal voice and one vote in the synod that met from time to time for deliberative purposes.

*Character of
confederacy
of Delos*

*Obligations
of member-
states*

Definite obligations were imposed upon the member-states, which were of an alternative character. The allies were to furnish their quota of equipped ships of war for prosecution of war against Persia or in lieu of this their quota of money. The synod which was to meet periodically for deliberative purposes, had according to Grote, the functions of (a) reviewing the assessment of the quota of ships or money to be furnished by

each state, done by their leader Athens. The Athenian leaders 'had no power' according to Grote, to enforce any regulation not approved by that body (synod)', (b) sitting as a court of justice for the trial of charges, either of remissness of service or failure to pay the assessed contribution by any individual state. Walker in Cambridge history (Anc. Vol. V) points out that on the authority of Thucydides while it is correct to assume that the synod had some general control over the confederacy, including coercion of recalcitrant members, there is no authority on the basis of which it may be said that the synod had any function as a court of appeal to hear cases against Athenian assessment of any member-state.

Power of the Synod

The confederacy included Ionian and Aeolian states. As it was a league of sea-states the basis of contract was contribution of equipped ships to the common fleet, or money payment. But most of the states having been poor and therefore unable to contribute ships contributed money. Such states as could not or did not contribute ships, paid 460 talents equivalent to £106,000 which was supposed to have been the value of one hundred ships that they were assessed to furnish. Thus there were two types of members, those contributing ships and those contributing money or *Phoros* as it was called.

Two types of members

The constitution of the confederacy suffered from certain inherent defects. *First*, Athens was the predominant partner. According to Walker, the contract between parties was not between allies on a footing of equality, but between two parties, Athens was one and the general body of the allies was the other. To this predominant partner powers were entrusted from the very beginning which rendered it inevitable that Athens should become the mistress of the league. Theoretically, however, each member had an equal voice.

Defects of the constitution of the confederacy

Secondly, it was left to Athens to decide what contribution and in what shape, each state should furnish

to the common pool. It was fortunate that the task of determining the contribution devolved on Aristides, a statesman noted for his honesty and impartiality.

Thirdly, the common fleets of the confederacy were commanded by Athenian generals and the money contribution furnished by the member-states which was used for building new ships left no scope for finding out which individual ship was built out of the contribution of which state. This left the question of ownership of the fleets unanswered and by all implications Athens became the owner of the ships.

Fourthly, payments of the money contributions were to be made to the *Hellenotamiae*—‘treasurers of the Greeks’ who were all Athenian magistrates.

Fifthly, it was left undetermined whether each state had or had not the right to secede from the confederacy. This question was left uncertain, it was neither expressly admitted nor expressly denied. For obvious reasons it could not have been but like this, for to deny this right at the initial stage would make the formation of the confederacy impossible, again to allow secession would mean break up of the confederacy. The American constitution did not expressly deny secession, yet it was on the question of secession there was the American Civil War and secession was prevented. In any case, the constitution of the confederacy of Delos leaving the question of secession unanswered strengthened the hands of Athens indirectly though.

Thus from the very start Athens held in her hands the means of gradually transforming, without any revolution, the confederacy from a naval union into a naval empire.

*Confederacy
of Delos—a
spiritual
child of
Themistocles*

Though formally or officially Themistocles was not the founder of the confederacy, yet when Athens undertook the leadership and entered upon the new paths which then opened out before her, she was under the spell of a spirit of which Themistocles had been the clearest and earliest interpreter. This is why the

confederacy of Delos is said to have been the *spiritual child* of Themistocles. In fact, it was Themistocles who contributed, more than any body else, to the making of Athens a truly naval power. He foresaw that the future of Athens lay in her naval strength. Expansion of the Athenian navy, winning of the battle of Salamis where he was in a subsidiary command and therefore he had to resort to a stratagem for forcing a battle in the narrow strait of Salamis. His walling of Athens and building of a naval base in well protected city of Piraeus led to the naval hegemony which later Athens found herself possessed of. Themistocles made Athens a sea power and herein lay the strength and future of Athens. The Athenian hegemony as denoted by the formation of the confederacy of Delos has been regarded as a commencement of the Athenian empire. "Credit has been given to Athens for a long-sighted ambition, aiming from the Persian War downwards at results which perhaps Themistocles may have partially divined, but which time and successive accidents opened to the distant view." But to over emphasise the fact that there was any systematic anticipation of the growth of an Athenian empire will be simplifying the situation rather too much and will certainly be fatal to our understanding of the real situation. The immediate problem before the confederacy was the defeat of the Persian power, still formidable, and to organise the confederacy as yet only inchoate. Yet all this, will not minimise the contributions of Themistocles and it was his spirit that dominated the whole affair of the formation of the confederacy of Delos.

Themistocles' contribution to the making of Athens a naval power

Subsequent results might have been partially divined by Themistocles

No systematic anticipation of the growth of the Athenian empire

3/Activities of the Confederacy of Delos : The first task before the confederacy was the assessment of the contributions to be made by the member-states. This had been accomplished by the end of 477 B.C. In the mean time Bosphorus had been secured by the expulsion of Pausanias from Byzantium. Occupation of Byzantium while restored the communications

Communications between Greece and Black Sea restored—Persia and Europe

between Greece and the Black Sea (Pontus Euxine), cut off those between Europe and Persia.

*Expedition
to Strymon
valley led
by Cimon*

Expulsion of the remaining Persian garrisons from the Thracian seaboard was the next task before the confederacy of Delos. In 476 B.C. Cimon expelled the Persian garrisons from Strymon without much difficulty. Only two of the Persian commandants, we know from Herodotus, offered feeble resistance, but the supply line having been cut off it became impossible to send succour to the fortresses and these surrendered. But the commandant Boges of Eion and Mascames of Doriscus foiled Athenian attempt. The latter of the two commandants succeeded eventually to keep Doriscus independent of Athens and it was never a part of the Athenian empire. Eion was taken but Boges exhibited Persian courage at its highest. The strategical importance of the Strymon valley explains the earnestness with which the campaign was conducted by Cimon and occupation of Eion (475 B.C.) regarded by Thucydides as the *first achievement* of the allied forces bear testimony to the fact of the importance of that region.

*Occupation
of the valley
including
Eion, except
Doriscus*

*No chrono-
logical data*

No sufficient data are available for the chronology of the subsequent activities of the confederacy. But on the basis of the meagre information supplied by Thucydides and Diodorus it may be regarded as fairly certain that by 470 B.C. Scyros and Carystus fell to the allies. Revolt of Naxos and the battle of Eurymedon took place after that date. Scyros was a barren rocky island yet its conquest was important because its inhabitants who were notorious pirates could only be checked if the island was brought under occupation. Further it lay on the route to Thrace and Hellespont and as such occupied a strategical situation. The pretexts for the attack on Scyros was found in a Delphic oracle commanding the Athenians to bring the bones of Theseus from that island. As the inhabitants of the islands—the Dolophians refused proper facilities for the search of the tomb of Theseus, it was attacked and

*Conquest of
Scyros and
Carystus*

occupied. The inhabitants were all expelled and the island was re-peopled by Athenian colonists. Carystus formed the extreme southern portion of the island of Euboea. Its population was different in race from those of the rest of the island, hence it could not count upon their help. This state refused to join the confederacy, for it had earlier suffered at the hands of Themistocles after the battle of Salamis. Occupation of this tiny state would while round off the extent of the area of the confederacy would liquidate an independent state in the nearest proximity of Athens. The tiny state had to capitulate and agree to join the confederacy. Its inhabitants were spared enslavement or expulsion.

From the military point of view the conquest of Carystus was indeed unimportant but from another point of view it was of special importance. "A free and sovereign community had been constrained to enter into the confederacy against its will. The first step had been taken on the broad and easy way that was to lead from the voluntary union of independent allies to an autocracy exercised over reluctant subjects."

*Importance
of the
conquest of
Carystus*

Before the Persian War Naxos was the most opulent and powerful of the Cyclades. But its prosperity was affected by the destruction of the town by the Persians on their way to Marathon. Yet, it must not be supposed that it had lost all its power and opulence, for without these it will be difficult to explain how it should have ventured to attempt secession from the confederacy. Naxos seceded from the confederacy and this suggests, that the burden imposed upon the Allies generated discontent and it was already rife in the League. Siege was laid of Naxos and it had to surrender its fleet and autonomy and to agree to pay *tribute* to Athens for the future. Thus the second step in the way of conversion of the confederacy of Delos into an Athenian empire was taken. For forcing Naxos to remain within the confederacy in a

*Secession of
Naxos
forcibly
prevented*

*Its
importance*

comparatively servile position took away the voluntary character of the confederacy.

*Capture of
the towns
and cities on
the coast-line
of Western
Asia Minor*

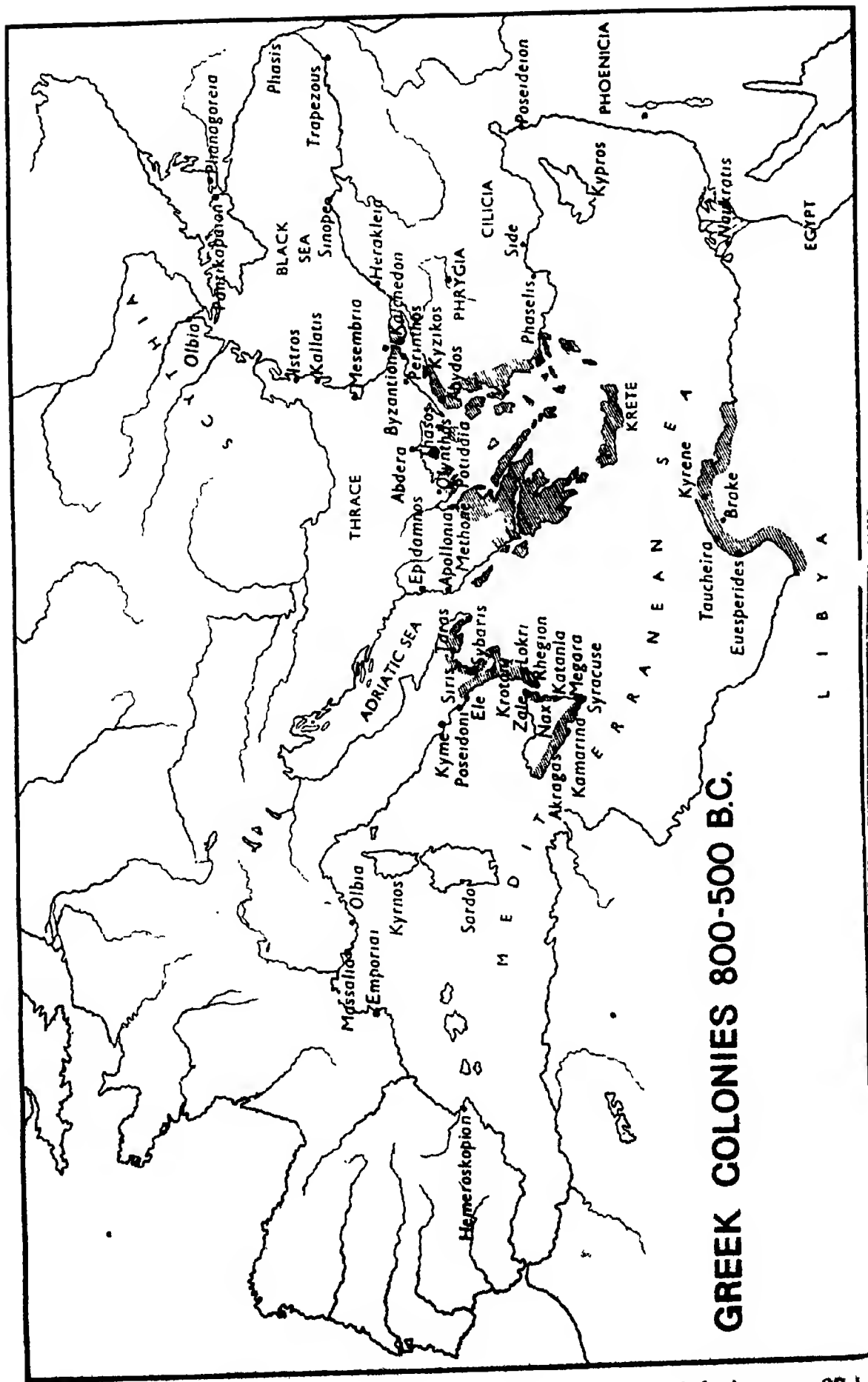
The final task of the confederacy of Delos was the liberation of Greeks of the whole coast-line of Western Asia Minor. It was either in 467 or 466 B.C. Cimon fitted a fleet of 200 triremes, according to Plutarch, but 300 triremes according to Diodorus, and within the course of a few months reduced the fortresses defended by the Persian garrisons. The unfortified towns joined the confederacy without any resistance. All the Greek cities on the coast-line and even semi-Greek cities in the interior had been freed from the Persian yoke and made to join the confederacy.

*Battle of
Eurymedon
(466 B.C.)*

Ever since the battle of Mycale the Persian Court looked upon the conquest of the Greek states by Athens with stoic resignation. But attack on Caria goaded it into action. By the end of the summer (466 B.C.) considerable force both by land and sea had been collected near the mouth of the small river Eurymedon. The Persian fleet comprised 200 vessels, mainly Phoenician, and the command of the whole force was given to Ariomandes, a Persian of high rank. There is no uniformity in the details of the battle given by Thucydides, Diodorus—on the basis of Ephorus, and Plutarch. The fact remained that Cimon upset the plan of the Persians by the rapidity of his movements. He engaged and defeated the Persian fleet as it was waiting for reinforcement from Cyprus, capturing a large number of the Persian vessels and followed up his success at sea by landing his troops and engaging the Persian forces and defeating them completely. All this was conclusive proofs of the military genius of Cimon, and the victory at Eurymedon was a matter for which the Athenians had reasons to be proud after those of Marathon and Salamis. Eurymedon was also a moment in the perennial conflict between the East and the West.

*Cimon's
military
genius*

In 465 B.C. Thasos revolted against the confederacy,



GREEK COLONIES 800-500 B.C.

more precisely against Athenian leadership. This revolt was much more formidable than the revolt of Naxos. Athens despatched a fleet under the command of Cimon and the Thasians were defeated in an engagement. This was followed by a siege of the town of Thasos, during which the Thasians appealed to Sparta for help which was agreed to. But the promise of help did not materialise due to an earthquake in Sparta and after a prolonged siege for more than two years the island was compelled to surrender (463 B.C.). The terms of capitulation were extremely severe; the fortifications had to be razed, fleet handed over to Athens, a huge indemnity had to be paid, a permanent tribute had to be agreed to. Besides, rights of Thasos in the mining districts as well as towns dependent on Thasos hitherto before had to be surrendered to Athens. The effect of these severe terms was that not even the most powerful of the allies would now venture to revolt.

Thasos forced to remain in the confederacy: suppression of the revolt

4/Transformation of the Confederacy of Delos into an Athenian Empire : It was a matter of much gratification for Athens in particular, that the confederacy of Delos, under her leadership had within a space of less than fifteen years succeeded in driving the Persians out of their last stronghold in Europe and had lost to Athens almost the whole coast-line of Asia Minor. The Aegean had become for all practical purposes a *mare clausum*, i.e. a closed sea. Yet Athens was not more than a predominant partner. She was not the mistress of an empire comprising the states of the allies as yet. But she was on the road to empire. There were several factors that led Athens to that situation.

Last of the Persian strongholds freed

First, the change from service for the confederacy to payment of *phoros*, i.e. money contribution was inevitable. The allies found it easier to contribute money to the common pool than furnishing equipped ships. Naval service was naturally irksome and when the main purpose of freeing the Greeks from the Persian

Allies found it easier to contribute money instead of ships.

yoke had been fulfilled states both big and small began to make money payment instead of furnishing ships. This was an easy way to transform the money payment into *tribute*.

*Three classes
of allied
states—
reduction in
their position*

Secondly, there were three classes of members of the confederacy of Delos, namely (*a*) those who were independent and furnished ships; (*b*) those who were independent and paid money; and (*c*) those who were subject allies. The last mentioned were particularly the small states of Asiatic Greeks who instead of rendering military service paid tributes. It was certainly to the interest of Athens to see as many states as possible paying money contribution. As the independent allies began to pay money contributions instead of ships, it became easy for Athens to use the funds as she liked. The ships which were built out of the money contributions were under her direct control. When new members were added, they were not allowed to retain their autonomy. Again Naxos and Thasos after their reduction were deprived of their autonomy. This process went on till at last Athens started regarding every state within the confederacy as a subject ally of Athens and the money contributions made by each was looked upon as *tribute* to the sovereign state.

*Undefined
character of
the consti-
tution of the
confederacy*

Thirdly, the process of the transformation of the confederacy into an empire was made easier because of the undefined character of the constitution of the confederacy itself and the predominance that Athens had in it from the first. For, it was Aristides the Athenian who made the assessment of the contributions to be made by the allied states; it was the body of Athenian treasurers (*Hellenotamiae*) again, to whom the payment had to be made.

*Question of
secession
unanswered*

Fourthly, the defects in the constitution of the confederacy were that the question of secession was left unanswered, the question of the voluntary participation was not stressed. The result was the forcible inclusion of Carystus which refused earlier to join the

confederacy, in the body of the allies. When discontent at Athenian predominance began to manifest in the revolt of Naxos and Thasos, these states were reduced by military measures and relegated to the position of subject allies without any autonomy. These had to a large extent changed the character of the confederacy of Delos.

Fifthly, although it is difficult to find out on the basis of the meagre data handed down to us, how the whole body of the Allies had been brought under the jurisdiction of the Athenian law courts, except Chios and Lesbos, the fact remained that this was accomplished before the era of the Peloponnesian War.

*Subjection to
Athenian
law courts*

Sixthly, the suggestion by some that Cimon deliberately hastened the process of degradation of the allies to the position of subjects, has been questioned by Walker who remarks that he must have encouraged the substitution of the contribution of ships by money, but he made no deliberate attempt to convert the allies into subjects. But it has already been pointed out that the substitution of contribution of ships by money payment was to the liking and advantage of the allies themselves and if any advantage Athens took of it, this was natural under the circumstances.

*Cimon's
deliberate
effort to
reduce the
allies to
subjects
refuted*

Seventhly, an innovation to the effect that the allies could be called upon to furnish soldiers to the league in times of danger altered the character of the confederacy which was a maritime alliance. As Prof. Bury suggests that it was probably Athens that tried to extend this military duty to her autonomous allies, and this policy caused revolts the results of which were their reduction with loss of autonomy.

*Extension of
military
service—
change in
character of
the confede-
racy*

Lastly, as the process of turning the alliance into an Empire advanced, Athens became sufficiently strong to discontinue the meetings of the Synod at Delos. She could now easily give up the form of consulting the body of the allies, for all decisions were hers and most

*Final step—
transfer of
the Treasury
from Delos
to Athens*

of the member-states were her own subjects. On the plea of the possible danger to Aegean following the Athenian disaster in Egypt, the treasury of the confederacy so long stationed at Delos was transferred to Athens itself. However honest or real the motive behind the declared reason of the transfer of the treasury to Athens, it was the final step in the transformation of the confederacy of Delos into Athenian Empire. 'The tribute money thus passed from the protection of the Ionian Apollo to the custody of the goddess of the Acropolis (i.e. Athena) to whom one-sixtieth of the tribute collected was endowed as first-fruit.'

*Extension of
the Athenian
Empire*

5/**Athenian Empire** : By the middle of the fifth century B.C. the Athenian empire included (i) most of the islands in the Aegean except Crete, Melos and Thera, (ii) most of the cities on and near the coast of the Western Asia Minor. Annual lists of states that brought tribute to Athens were inscribed on stone pillars fragments of which have survived. From these fragments it appears that some 170 states brought tribute. At the end of every four years the assessment of tribute was revised. The allies had an opportunity to appeal to the Athenian law courts for reduction of the assessment, but seldom there was any reduction of assessment until the beginning of the Peloponnesian War when as a measure of conciliation, in view of the danger, the assessment of a large number of the allies had been reduced.

*Revision of
assessment
of tribute*

*Extension of
Athenian
law courts'
jurisdiction
to the sub-
ject states*

The whole body of the allies was subject to the jurisdiction of the Athenian law courts. But as Athenian imperialism grew every criminal case between Athenians and any of her subjects was decided at Athens. This was done with a view to check every act of treason through this method of trial at Athens itself. Ordinarily all criminal cases between the disputants of the subjects themselves were tried in their own cities and law courts. But should there be any revolt by any subject state, its right of jurisdiction as also

other rights used to be curtailed after reduction of the revolt. In 446 B.C. when revolt of Chalcis was put down her right of jurisdiction was curtailed and every case of death penalty, loss of civic rights or banishment awarded by the Chalcian law courts had to be formally placed before Athens and ratified. In this way various arrangements with various cities were entered into by Athens, and measure of freedom varied from state to state. Law suits arising from breach of contract was heard in the defendants' courts and there were instances of Athenians treated unfairly. But this generosity was forgotten in resentment caused by the system of trying political cases in Athens.

Weaknesses inherent in the Athenian empire were that (i) the political life and thought of Greece were opposed to the idea of a union which curtailed sovereignty of the states. (ii) Sovereign city-state was the very basis and breath of the civilised Hellenic world and no state would be ready to surrender even the smallest part of its sovereignty. In times of common danger Greek states had combined but each parted as the danger was over. This usual right of secession must have been in their mind when the Ionian states joined the confederacy of Delos. (iii) Such being the tendency towards individual freedom of the Greek city-states, it required a mighty army and constant vigilance to keep any union or empire together, and it was well nigh impossible to weld even small Greek city-states into any political unity at the cost of individual sovereignty. "An empire, however disguised," remarks Prof. Bury "was always considered an injustice—a defiance to the political morality of the Hellas. A Greek felt it a degradation of his dignity, or an infringement of his freedom, not to be the citizen of a free and sovereign city." (iv) Greek idea of liberty pervaded both the internal and the foreign policy of each state and however liberal and efficient the supervision of the mistress might be, alliance at the cost of sovereignty, with the mistress was loss of the best thing conceivable,

*Inherent
weakness of
any Greek
empire*

the liberty. Thus the Athenian empire was opposed to Greek political sentiment.

*Plutarch's
life of Cimon*

6/Cimon : His Policy and Condemnation :

Plutarch's *Life of Cimon* is considered to be one of the most valuable in the series of his biographies, of the Greek worthies. He gives not only a description of Cimon's person but also a good analysis of his character. He was tall, with a great mass of curly hair. But what is more, Plutarch gives us the details from which we are in a position to appreciate the character of one who is admittedly the most prominent figure in one of the greatest periods of Athenian history, and do justice to the greatness of the services rendered by him both to Athens and to Greece.

*His early
life training:
His character*

Cimon, son of Miltiades had in his youth shown little promise. He was reputed to be drunken and dissolute and was even likened by people to his grandfather who was commonly nicknamed 'Simpleton'. With no liberal education, he was described by a contemporary writer, Stesimbrotus as a Peloponnesian rather than Athenian. He was uncultivated but honest. Plutarch credits Cimon as not inferior to Themistocles in sagacity and Aristides gave him support for he discerned in him some good natural qualities. Particularly his military qualities. Cimon's simplicity, geniality and lavish hospitality rendered him popular. Cimon's power of making friends throughout the whole of Greece was manifest at the Olympian games in 472 B.C. where he became the object of universal attention as was Themistocles in 476 B.C. Like many another soldier he could speak with the eloquence of heart as evidenced in Messenian debate. Contrast between Cimon and Pericles was "as complete as that between Gladstone and Disraeli." Cimon was trained in music and gymnastics, he had been taught to ride, to sing and play the harp, but he was altogether ignorant of the new Learning and culture that came into fashion in the days of Salamis and Plataea, of which Pericles was the peak and flower.

*Contrast
with Pericles*

"Whatever verdict may be passed upon his statesmanship, there is hardly room for doubt as to his military genius. If he is to be judged either by his unbroken career of success or by the magnitude of the results achieved, he must be ranked as one of the greatest, if not actually the greatest, of Athenian commanders."

*One of the
greatest
Athenian
commanders*

By marriage Cimon was related to two great houses of Athens. His marriage with Isodice, granddaughter of Megacles and his sister's marriage with Callias, the richest man in Athens strengthened his position. Having been himself a descendant of the tyrants of Chersonese, Cimon was little likely to go with the tide of democracy which was rising ever higher in Athens. It was the solid support of the aristocratic interest that procured for Cimon the supreme command:

*Aristocratic
support
behind
Cimon*

The cardinal points of Cimon's policy were two: (i) the prosecution of war with Persia, and (ii) maintenance of peace and goodwill with Sparta on the basis of a division of leadership—that Athens should be mistress of the seas, and Sparta leader of the continental Greeks. "Cimon's sympathy with Sparta and his connections there became an important political fact, and undoubtedly helped to postpone a rupture between Sparta and Athens." In this policy Aristides, the leader of democracy and Cimon who was out of sympathy with democracy had pulled together.

*Two
cardinal
principles of
his policy*

The work of emancipation of the Greeks from the Persian domination continued even after Plataea. Sparta sent out a squadron under the command of Pausanias. But his intrigue with the Persian king after his success at Byzantium led to his recall. But he could not be punished for want of positive proof. He was not, however, sent out again. But Pausanias returned to the scene of his intrigue of his own and resumed possession of Byzantium which gave him control over the inner gate to Black Sea. He then seized Sestos which gave him control over the outer

*Cimon
appointed to
the supreme
command of
the Athenian
forces*

gate. This was directly against the interest of Athens as she was extending her political and commercial interests in those regions. Athens sent out a squadron under Cimon who drove out Pausanias from Byzantium and also recovered Sestos. In this expedition which resulted in the transfer of the confidence by the Ionian Greeks from Sparta to Athens, Cimon was in subordinate command. He was second-in-command to Aristides. But after the formation of the confederacy of Delos Cimon was appointed to the supreme command of the Athenian forces, a position which he held without any break down to 462 B.C.

*Cimon's
foreign
policy and
military
exploits*

It has been already mentioned that prosecution of war against Persia for the emancipation of the Greeks from Persian yoke was one of the cardinal principles of foreign policy of Cimon. The task naturally was undertaken by him with all earnestness when he set sail (476 B.C.) for Strymon. He had no great difficulty in reducing the Persian garrisons there. Only commandants Boges of Eion and Mascames of Doriscus offered resistance. While Cimon succeeded in compelling Boges to surrender after offering resistance exhibiting Persian courage at its highest, Doriscus eluded success and had never become a part of the Athenian empire. Cimon realised the strategic value of obtaining a stronghold in the Strymon valley and his concentration on Eion was dictated by this policy.

*Reduction of
Scyrus—an
intermediate
station*

The next exploit of Cimon was the reduction of Scyrus and the expulsion of the Dolopian pirates and sending of Athenian colonists there. Scyrus, a barren rocky place unimportant from ordinary point of view, was of much strategic value. For, the pirates from this island disturbed the sea borne commerce and it lay on the route to Thrace and Hellespont. While Athens was winning posts on the fringe of the Aegean, it was necessary to secure some intermediate stations. Scyrus served this purpose well.

Capture of Carystus and reduction of the revolt of Naxos must have been assigned to subordinate



commanders, for the name of Cimon is not connected with these by any ancient writer. But the gradual progress of the Athenian cause was looked upon with resignation by Persia since the battle of Mycale. But attack on Caria was a direct menace to the Persian hold on the whole southern coast of Asia Minor. By the end of the summer of 468 B.C. Persia assembled a considerable force both by land and sea near the mouth of the river Eurymedon. Persian fleet comprised 200 vessels. Cimon was in command of the Athenian forces and he engaged the Persian fleet off the island of Cyprus defeating the Persians with heavy loss and capturing about 100 Persian vessels. He then resorted to a stratagem. He picked out the best of his troops, dressed them in Persian dress, placed them on board of the captured Persian vessels. The Persians mistook them as a detachment of their own fleet allowed them to enter their camp area. When fighting began Persian had already lost the battle. However incredible this account may appear the fact remains, that Cimon followed up his naval victory with great expedition, landed his troops and defeated the Persians completely. The victory was rendered all the more decisive because Cimon captured the reinforcement of 80 ships that arrived. "The victory of the Eurymedon" remarks Walker "must rank as one of the most glorious in the annals of Athens, or of Greece." It was a conclusive proof of the military genius of Cimon. "It is the victory of which Athens had most reason to be proud after those of Marathon and Salamis." Eurymedon was the highest watermark of Cimon's career as also the fulfilment of his Persian policy.

*Cimon's
victory at
the battle of
Eurymedon*

Victory of Eurymedon completed the task of the confederacy of Delos and Athens was now free to pursue a policy that made the confederacy her empire. Island of Thasos was the most important island on the Thracian coast. Athens was trying to plant a settlement on the Strymon valley and lay her hands on the traffic in those regions. But this colided with the

*Revolt of
Thasos—
reduction by
Cimon
(463 B.C.)*

interests of Thasos, for her prosperity depended on her trade in Thrace. A dispute soon arose about certain gold mines which led Thasos to revolt against Athens. The Thasians hoped to obtain half from Macedonia, Thrace and Sparta. But this hope did not materialise. Sparta which agreed to send help was prevented from doing so because of the revolt of the Helots close upon an earthquake. Cimon defeated the Thasian fleet and then laid siege of the town and after prolonged siege forced Thasos to capitulate. The Thasian ships were taken possession of by the Athenians, large indemnity was paid, a tribute payment was agreed to, rights to the gold mines was transferred to Athens and walls of the town were razed to the ground.

*Cimon's
trial and
acquittal:
emergence
Pericles in
Athenian
politics*

After the reduction of Thasos (463 B.C.) Cimon was brought to trial in connection with the audit of his official accounts as general of the siege. It may be pointed out that after death of Aristides, Cimon remained the most powerful in Athens. But he was running counter to the growing tide of democracy which found its exponents in Ephialtes and Pericles. While the oligarchs were behind Cimon for obvious reasons, vast majority of the people stood behind the democratic leaders Ephialtes and Pericles. Cimon was charged with bribe taking from Alexander of Macedon by the Greek demagogues whose stock in trade was to bring such charge of corruption against men prominent in public life. Cimon was tried and acquitted. But this was a turning point in the history of Athens at this epoch. It was on this occasion that Pericles took an active part in Athenian politics, and his appearance on the side of the prosecution proclaimed that coalition of the great aristocratic houses was at end.

*Great
earthquake
in Sparta
(464 B.C.)
—Revolt of
the Helots*

The great earthquake which had severely rocked Sparta in 464 B.C. took a toll of 20 thousand lives; only five houses remained standing, it is said. The Helots of Laconia, living a debased life since the Dorian migration, looked upon the disaster as a golden chance for revolt. They rose in revolt and advanced against the

ruined city. Insurrection also became general in Messenia. The attack on Sparta was repulsed due to the pluck and courage of the young King Archidamus. Despite massacre of the Spartans by the rebels in certain pockets, within a year the rebels were compelled to take refuge on Mount Ithome that rises out of the Messenian plains. Spartans were notoriously unskilled in siege operations and when by the beginning of 462 it became evident to them that it would not be possible to reduce the Helots of Ithome, they appealed to their allies, and in particular made an earnest appeal to Athens, for help since the Athenians were best in siege operations.

*Siege of
Ithome:
Spartan
appeal to
Athens*

Ephialtes and his friends opposed sending of any help in response to the appeal before the Athenian Assembly. In the embarrassment of Sparta there lay the opportunity of her humiliation which they wanted to see. But the policy of Cimon having been maintenance of peace and good will with Sparta championed the Spartan cause. Cimon pleaded "with all the force of a double metaphor, that Greece should not be allowed to go lame, and that Athens should not consent to lose her yoke-fellow." The Assembly voted a force of 4,000 hoplites under Cimon's command. Thus shows that Cimon still held sufficient influence over the Assembly and his ascendancy was yet unshaken.

*Cimon's
advocacy on
behalf of
Sparta*

Cimon led the Athenian force to Ithome, fought jointly with the Spartans but failed to take Ithome. Suspecting the Athenian hoplites of sympathy with the insurgents, the Athenians at once dismissed Cimon and his troops. "The effect of Cimon's dismissal from Ithome was instantaneous and the triumph of the democratic party was complete." The expedition to Ithome and its failure exploded the Spartan policy of Cimon; it exposed the futility of making sacrifices for courting Spartan friendship. When Cimon returned discredited and disappointed he was denounced as a *philolaconian* and the democrats felt they could now ostracise him. Further, his policy was at once reversed and

*Failure of
Cimon's
expedition*

*His Spartan
policy
discredited:
His
ostracism*

Athens entered into an alliance with Thessaly which she and Sparta had avoided because of Thessaly's pro-Persian policy during the Persian War. Athens also entered into an alliance with Argos, which was a rival of Sparta for the hegemony of Peloponnesus. Athens also withdrew from the anti-Persian alliance with Sparta, at its head. Cimon was ostracised and his foreign policy with regard to Sparta stood discredited and he and his followers found it impossible to prevent the triumph of the democratic party under Ephialtes and Pericles.

*Assessment
of Cimon's
Spartan
policy*

Writers on Greek history since the days of Grote have not been much fair to Cimon. They have branded Cimon's policy toward Sparta in the crisis of the revolt of the Helots "as a piece of quixotic generosity." Nothing could be more unfair. After all the Spartan appeal to Athens for help was based on the alliance that still subsisted between Sparta and Athens as also other allies, against Persia. It would have been uncharitable on the part of Athens, so long as that alliance, whatever might have been its purpose, to refuse help to Sparta in her calamity. Cimon's policy of maintaining peace and friendship with Sparta was sound indeed. To argue on the suggestion of Thucydides that Sparta played false with Athens when she promised help to the Thasian by invading Athens does not stand scrutiny. The earthquake and the revolt of the Helots stood in the way of their fulfilling the promise of help. But if even the rumour of such a promise had reached the Athenians and certainly Ephialtes or Pericles would not have minced their words to place it before the Assembly, Cimon's eloquence would have fallen on deaf ears.

*Recall of
Cimon*

In 457 B.C. when the Spartans and the Athenians were about to begin fighting in the battle of Tanagra Cimon, already in exile for four years, appeared on the scene and offered to fight for his country. But the permission was refused. But he exhorted his friends who were in the Athenian force to fight valiantly. The

battle was ultimately won by Sparta, but slaughter on either side was huge. The Athenian hoplites who were followers of Cimon did their best, any slackness on their part would have been disastrous. In consequence of their heroism Cimon was recalled from exile.

Cimon on his return to Athens negotiated a truce for five years with between Athens and Sparta known as *Five Years' Truce*. This gave Athens and her allies to resume their warfare against Persia and none else was thought to be more fit to command than Cimon, the hero of Eurymedon. In the mean time a rapprochement was effected between Cimon and Pericles through the former's sister. At the beginning of the summer of 450, Cimon set sail for Cyprus with a fleet of 200 ships. A part of the fleet laid a blockade of Citium on the south-eastern coast of the island. But before Citium fell Cimon died of disease or wounds.

*Cimon
negotiates
Five Years'
Truce*

*Expedition
against
Cyprus—his
death
450 B.C.*

Death of Cimon also ended the anti-Persian policy he had so successfully pursued. "Even his followers must have recognised that no further successes against Persia could be looked for, now that the great commander to whose genius so much of the past successes had been due had passed away.

CHAPTER 6

Athenian Constitution

*Monarchy
replaced by
Aristocracy*

1/**Retrospect** : Transformation from monarchy to aristocracy was the chief feature of the early constitutional history of Athens. Athenian tradition that monarchy came to an end at Athens with King Codrus who was too good to have a successor, is a story of later invention. Kingship while it existed in Athens was subjected to various restrictions. The first limitation to royal power effected by the aristocracy was the institution of *Polemarch*, i.e. a military commander. Polemarch was elected from the nobles and took over the supreme command of the army, which originally was in the hands of the king. The next step was the usurpation of the powers of the king by the powerful family of Medontis. The Medontis instituted the office of *archon* or regent who now usurped the functions of the king. Although kingship was not formally abolished the *archon* who held the post for life and his successors in line after him, almost a new royal line was instituted, except for the name. But the power of this kingly magistrate or *archon* was also later on limited and the post ceased to be one for life and its term was reduced to ten years only. This was done somewhere during the middle of the eighth century B.C. The next step was taken when in 683-82 B.C. *archonship* was made an annual office, and practice of preserving the list of the archons was instituted. But still the king or Basileus continued to exist. In this way there came to stay three officers in Athens early in the seventh century B.C. when all these three offices became annually elected ones. These were those of the *Archon*, *King (Basileus)* and *Polemarch*. In this way monarchy yielded place to aristocracy which was carried on by these three officers.

The *Archon* was the supreme judge in all civil

suits, the *Polemarch* was the commander-in-chief and besides performed some judicial duties. The *Basileus* or the king was in charge of management of the state religion and of performing judicial function in cases connected with religion. He was also the president of the Council of Areopagus. The executive and judicial powers of this president must have been enormous at a time when Athens had only an ill-organised assembly, no executive council, no written law.

*Functions of
the three
highest
magistrates:
Archon,
Polemarch
and
Basileus*

The origin of the Council of Areopagus is carried back to a period for which there was no direct historical evidence. Little light has yet been thrown on the original constitution on the growth of powers of the Council of Areopagus. Functions which tradition assigned to the early Council of Areopagus were as varied as they were vague. It was supposed to have been the chief administrative body with guardianship of the ordinances of the state and an aocratic censorial authority over the life of citizens, and even, apparently though, with power of revision of laws.

*Council of
Areopagus
—its early
character*

Earliest movement towards democracy in Athens was the result of two pressing dangers, namely, the arbitrary character of the government and the economic distress of the people. There was a demand for publication of a code of law so that laws on which judges might decide cases might be known to the people and penalties might be fixed for different types of breaches of laws. In c. 621 B.C. the demand was met by publication of laws by Draco—a mighty work only fragments of which have survived.

*Earliest
movement
towards
democracy*

The structure of a constitution—democratic in character, was first carefully laid by Solon (circ. 594). But the cumbered ground had to be first cleared before the first stone of the democratic structure was laid. In this, Solon had to play a double role, those of a corrector and reconciler on the one hand and a reformer on the other. He removed the existing evils of social and economic antagonism. Although Solon's

*Solon's
double role*

*Unsuitable
land system
in Athens*

chief claim to our consideration rests on his constitutional reforms, his socio-economic reforms also deserve special mention. The Athenian land system worked ill in the country and the tenants of the Eupatrid families although had been free in theory except insofar as their obligation to pay one-sixth of the produce of the soil was concerned, often placed them at the mercy of the landlords from whom they would borrow whenever there was a bad harvest and become debtors on the security of their own persons. Often as a result of failure to repay debts in time the tenants became serfs or were sold out of the country, and mortgage pillars marking the debt sprang up everywhere on the farmers' land. Solon's heroic measure called *Seisachthia* removed the burden of debt by declaring all existing debts cancelled. Money lending on personal security was prohibited. *Seisachthia* coupled with prohibition of money lending on personal security was the first step in the establishment of a popular constitution. Next preliminary was a general cancellation of all decrees except those against persons guilty of murder, homicide or an attempt at tyranny.

*Reform of
Solon*

Seisachthia

*Solonian
constitution:
—a timo-
cracy*

The constitution which Solon next proceeded to frame wore the external appearance of a *timocracy* as it was based on a fourfold division of the society on the basis of wealth. The office that still stood highest and perhaps in real power—the archonship, was restricted to the first of the four classes into which the society was divided, and called *pentacoseomedimi*. The lowest class—the *Thetes* was excluded from all offices of state and were only admitted to *Ecclesia* and the popular courts. This was an important step in the direction of democracy. All our authorities agree that only the three higher classes were admitted to state offices.

*Council of
Four Hundred*

A new council of four hundred members, one hundred chosen from each of the four Ionian tribes, was created. The chief and perhaps the only function of the council of four hundred was to prepare business for the popular assembly called the *Ecclesia*. The

popular assembly, i.e. the *Ecclesia* was no new creation, Solon extended its powers. The relationship between the Council of Four Hundred and the *Ecclesia* was not defined, but the former was a permanent deliberative body which secured constant and regular meetings of the *Ecclesia*.

*Popular
assembly:
Ecclesia*

The radical measure undertaken by Solon, and which was the very corner-stone of democracy, was his constitution of the courts of justice. "A criticism preserved in Aristotle's *Politics* is to the effect that Solon appears to have established the democracy by composing the jury courts out of all citizens, even though he did give what seemed the minimum of power to the people—the power of electing its magistrates and of calling them to account." As the panels of judges were enrolled by lot, the poorest of the citizens might have his turn. Any magistrate after the end of the tenure of his office could be called to question by the popular courts. People sitting in sections as sworn judges, were called the *Heliaea* as distinguished from the *Ecclesia*. The latter met to choose judges and pass laws.

*Popular
courts:
Heliaea*

The Council of Areopagus which was in the nature of a Council of Elders was deprived by Solon of its deliberative functions and powers. It thus ceased to have any direct part in administration and legislation. Solon constituted it to be the guardian of the laws with wide powers of control over the magistrates and censorial power over the citizens. The Council of Areopagus retained its judicial and religious powers. Thus it became a body vested with an empty dignity, more or less.

*Reduction of
the powers of
the Council
of Areopagus*

Solon had also attempted by one of his laws to create a national spirit and to do away with the political apathy characteristic of a people unaccustomed to exert its powers, by imposing the penalty of loss of citizenship on any one guilty of neutrality in a political feud.

*Solon's law
to create
national
spirit*

*Criticism of
Solonian
constitution*

The general verdict of the later Greek writers on Solonian constitution seems to have been that it was intended to be a mixed type of government. The Athenian constitution seemed to be a harmonious mixture of oligarchic, aristocratic and democratic elements. Oligarchy was represented by the Council of Areopagus, aristocracy by the magistracy and democracy by the popular courts. "The constitution of the judicial courts out of the people was the secret of democracy which Solon discovered. It is his title to fame in the history of the growth of popular government in Europe. Without ignoring the tendencies to a democratic development which existed before him, and without, on the other hand, disguising the privileges which he reserved to the upper classes, we can hardly hesitate to regard Solon as the founder of the Athenian democracy" (Bury). Solon had set Athens politically in advance of other Greek states, he was the inaugurator of a brisker city life which was one of the chief sources of Athens' further political development. He was, if not the creator of Athenian democracy—as we understand democracy to mean today—at least the creator of the main conditions which rendered democracy possible in Athens. The use of lot for the purpose of appointment of public officers was a feature of Solon's reforms. It was in the nature of a combination of the voice of God with human device of election that Solon instituted this system. To avoid possibility of selection of incompetent persons to the magistracy, Solon devised the system of electing forty persons, ten from each tribe initially and selection of magistrates from this body of elected forty by lot.

Solon had created a liberal government indeed and some degree of permanence might be hoped for it because of its seemingly even-balance of political claims. But he had omitted to correct certain evils that threatened any constitution in Athens with constant danger. Despite Solon's attempt to create a national spirit by enacting a law imposing loss of

citizenship on persons guilty of neutrality in any political feud, the people's apathy to exert its powers could not be removed. This was responsible for the subsequent restoration of tyranny in Athens under Peisistratus. Further, two disturbing causes which Solon had not removed were that (i) he did not do away with local unions of 'people of the hills', 'people of the plains', etc., and local feuds between these different groups or unions of people divided on geographical lines continued as before even after Solonian reforms. (ii) Solon also retained the four Ionic tribes, with separate powers and separate interests, as before. Both these elements of disturbance showed themselves soon and local feuds were the proximate cause of the usurpation of the government by Peisistratus. Despotism of Peisistratus was the first power which succeeded in stamping the local feuds out. But these reappeared immediately after the expulsion of the tyrants. But at this crisis the influence of Solon's constitution which made *people* a factor in the political destiny of the country was seen and it was, as Herodotus tells us, Cleisthenes, who 'took the demos into partnership' succeeded with its help to inaugurate a new series of reforms.

*Defects of
Solonian
constitution :
Rise of
tyranny*

*Expulsion
of the tyrants
—people a
political
factor*

It was in 508 B.C. that the firm foundations for the later democratic machinery were laid by Cleisthenes who had learnt the lesson taught by the immediate past and effected a change in the Ionic tribes by getting them fused into one another and by redistributing these into ten new divisions. Each division called *demes* was although of somewhat local character, was not representative of local interest. The real meaning of this redistribution of people into ten demes was the preservation of national unity by destroying the old clan interests by a complete divorce of state from different family organisations. Cleisthenes a democratic legislator, sought to make the people "mix as much as possible with one another, to destroy separate interests, and thus to create a common national spirit." But not content with fostering the tendencies that might make

*Cleisthenes'
democratic
reforms :
Fusion of
tribes into
ten 'demes'*

for democracy in the existing members of the state, Cleisthenes infused into Athens a fresh strain of plebeian blood and sentiment by conferring civic rights on a large number of persons of foreign birth, or of the lowest origin.

*Boule or the
Council of
Five Hun-
dred*

The greatest of Cleisthenes' creations dependent on the tenfold division of the people was the *Boule*, a Council of Five Hundred, taking fifty members for each of the ten demes or tribes. This Council was more self-existent than the parallel Council of the Four Hundred instituted by Solon. The whole body of five hundred did not sit constantly. The official year was divided into 360 days and fifty councillors from each of the ten tribes would sit as permanent committee of the Council for a tenth part of a year, by turn.

*Powers and
functions of
the Council
of Five
Hundred*

The Council of Five Hundred was the supreme administrative authority in the state. The old power of the Archons was largely diminished, and they became executive officers acting under the orders of the Council. The Council was at once a war office and Admiralty, a board of Public Works for the building, repair and upkeep of temples and other buildings, also a foreign office representing the state in all diplomatic negotiations. While in financial matters the Council was supreme, the power of declaration of war and conclusion of peace lay solely with the Assembly, i.e. the *Ecclesia*. The Council controlled all receipts and expenditure and the ten new finance officials called *Apodectae*, i.e. receivers, one from each tribe, acted under its direction. The deliberative function of the Council was also very important for no proposal could come before the Assembly until it had been discussed by the Council and passed by it. The Council also had some judicial functions. On the basis of Cleisthenes' division of the people into ten tribes, military reforms were undertaken after some years and generals (*Strategi*) were elected one from each of the ten tribes.

The final institution connected with the name of

Cleisthenes was the greatest precautionary measure called *ostracism* which was a device to know the opinion of the people about any individual suspected to acquire personal power at the cost of the state. Any person who was doubted to be an enemy of democracy might be quietly got rid of by a popular vote on oyster-shell, from which the name *ostracism* was derived. If six thousand votes were cast against any individual he would be exiled for ten years. *Ostracism* did not, however, entail loss of honour, rights or property.

*Device of
Ostracism*

2/Athenian Democracy put to Tests : A democracy, that which fully satisfied the Greek nation, was one in which every attribute of sovereignty might be shared by every free man irrespective of rank or property. A true citizen, in the opinion of Aristotle, could not exist without a voice in the Legislative Assembly, and such share in the administration as was necessary to secure the responsibility of the magistrates. Such a democracy was established by Cleisthenes. While the democratic constitution of Cleisthenes was a vast improvement upon the foundations laid earlier by Solon, it was not a finished democracy and therefore needed some more reform measures to complete it. But in the mean time Cleisthenes' democracy had to stand its first real test.

*Democratic
defence of
Athens*

When Cleisthenes was engaged in reforming the constitution, Isagoras who was supported by the tyrants' house was his rival. In the factious contest Cleisthenes was victorious and his victory was the victory of reform. Isagoras now appealed to the Spartans who disfavoured democracy, that the Alcmaeonids who were as a clan under a curse, should be expelled from Athens. Cleisthenes who belonged to an Alcmaeonid family, without attempting resistance, left Athens. King Cleomenes of Sparta had earlier invaded Athens to help expulsion of tyrant Hippias, of the family of Peisistratus. Cleomenes now invaded Athens for a second time not on a mission of liberating Athens from tyrants as before but on the side of Isagoras who was an enemy

*Background
of Spartan
attacks on
Athens*

of reforms. He entered into Athens and expelled 700 families on the suggestion of Isagoras and attempted to dissolve the constitution and set up an oligarchy instead. But the whole people of Athens rose in arms and forced Isagoras to surrender and Cleomenes and his band of soldiers to leave Athens. Cleisthenes returned to Athens and completed his task of democratic reforms.

Athens saved

The democratic constitution came to first real test now that Cleomenes who suffered humiliation at the hands of the Athenians, decided to avenge it. Cleomenes arranged with Boeotians and Chalcidians to invade Athens. Isagoras was now in league with Cleomenes for establishing not oligarchy but tyranny in Athens. The joint attack on Athens was unsuccessful due to the withdrawal of the Corinthians who joined hands with Cleomenes to begin with but withdrew on a second thought that the invasion was unjust, as also to the difference of opinion between the two Spartan leaders Cleomenes and Demaratus. The Athenians were also united in their defence of the country and marched to the Eulysian plain where the Spartans arrived. Cleomenes had to retire.

*Athenian
victory over
Thebes
(506)*

Thebes had readily agreed to side with Sparta against Athens. Thebes wanted to hold the city of Plataea in the Boeotian league under Theban supremacy, against her wish. Athens supported Plataea in defence of her independence. Athens went to the defence of Plataea against Theban attack, but the threatened conflict was averted due to the intervention of Corinth. It was decided that no Boeotian city should be coerced to join the Boeotian league under Thebes, against its will. Threatened conflict was thus averted and Athenians began to retire when they were treacherously attacked by the Thebans only to be defeated. Defeat of the Thebans was complete and the river Asopus was regarded as the southern boundary of Theban territory. The town of Hysiae had to be surrendered to Athens thus giving her a post in Boeotia itself.

The Chalcidians who also sided with the Spartans were laying waste the northern demes of Athens were about to be joined by the defeated Boeotians, i.e. Thebans after their retreat. But Athenians intercepted the Boeotians and defeated them. Next, the Athenians struck a crushing blow on the Chalcidians and were compelled to cede to Athens a large part of Lalantine plain. The iron chains with which the Athenians had bound their foes were proudly preserved on the Acropolis and the ransom received from them was dedicated to Athena. A portico was set up within the sanctuary of Delphi in commemoration of this victory. Thus Athenian democracy not only saved itself but acquired new territories—a foot-hold in Boeotia itself and a large part of the Chalcidian plain. This rich plain was divided among the Athenian citizens who settled there on the same conditions as the *cleruchies* of Salamis.

*Democracy
saves itself
—acquires
new terri-
tories*

3/Completion of Athenian Democracy Under Ephialtes and Pericles : After the death of Themistocles and Aristides the leadership of the democratic faction at Athens descended to Ephialtes and of conservative faction to Cimon. Intrigues in the city made Cimon unhappy and he undertook the command of the Athenian fleet and defeated the Persians at the battle of Eurymedon. This consolidated the liberties of Greece. But on his return to Athens in glory, he soon lost his popularity by advising reconciliation with Sparta. It was on his arguments that the Assembly reluctantly agreed to send an Athenian contingent to help Sparta against her Helots in revolt at Ithome. But the Spartans did not accept the aid in good grace. They even began to suspect the Athenian soldiers who came to help them whereupon the Athenian soldiers returned home in anger. This brought Cimon to disgrace and he was ostracised at the instigation of Pericles, his political rival. The oligarchic party was so demoralised by Cimon's fall that for two succeeding generations the government remained in the hands of

*Ephialtes
leader of
democratic
faction :
Cimon
leader of
aristocratic,
i.e. oligarchic
faction*

*Cimon
disgraced*

*Ephialtes
takes away
the remain-
ing powers
and
privileges of
Areopagus*

*Aristotle's
praise of
Ephialtes'
work*

*Assembly
invested with
the power of
trying state
officials—a
great demo-
cratic step*

the democrats. The leader of the democratic party at the time of the fall of Cimon was Ephialtes, who was poor but incorruptible. The time was propitious for the democrats, for the war with the Persians had united the free men of Athens, and at the moment of national crisis all class distinctions were forgotten. Further, the victory of Salamis that saved Athens and Greece, was won by navy which was manned by poorer citizens controlled by the mercantile middle class, and not by the Athenian army which was dominated by aristocrats. The oligarchs sought to maintain the powers and privileges of the Areopagus unimpaired and making it the supreme authority in the state. But Ephialtes impeached several members of Areopagus for malfeasance, put some to death and persuaded the Athenian Assembly to abolish all powers the Areopagus yet possessed. Aristotle who was a conservative later approved of this total reduction of powers of the Areopagus on the ground that 'the transfer to the commons of the judicial functions that had belonged to the Senate (Areopagus) appears to have been an advantage, for corruption finds an easier material in a small number than in a large one'. Right to impeach the high officials if they would violate laws, seeing to the obeying of the country's laws by the people, supervising the administration of the country were all taken away from the Council of Areopagus and transferred to the Assembly of the people. Areopagus' powers to exercise censorial authority over the citizens and to probe into the private morals of the citizens were abolished. Only certain religious duties and jurisdiction over homicidal cases were left into the hands of the Council of Areopagus. A major democratic step was thus taken by making the executive, that is the state officials responsible to the people's Assembly for their acts of omission or commission.

Carrying the work of Ephialtes to its logical conclusion, Pericles extended eligibility to the archonship, which had so long been confined to the wealthier classes,

to the third class, i.e. the *Zeugitai*, and soon thereafter, to the fourth or the lowest class the *Thetes*. For a moment Pericles seemed to have moved in the opposite direction when in 451 B.C. he persuaded the Assembly to restrict franchise to the legitimate offsprings of an Athenian father and Athenian mother. No legal marriage between a citizen and a non-citizen was permitted. This was, obviously, aimed at discouraging intermarriage with foreigners, to reduce illegitimate births and 'perhaps to reserve to the jealous burghus of Athens the material rewards of citizenship and empire'. Periclean idea, as expressed by Thucydides, was that the citizens of Athens, resting on the empire as their material basis, should form an ideal of intellectual and political development for the Greek world, that the individual Athenian should be a type of intellectual many-sidedness and varied political activity. Such an ideal as this, naturally left no room for an aristocracy within Athens, hence the tendency of political development within the state was necessarily democratic. Under Pericles Athenian citizen enjoyed *isonomia* and *isegoria*, i.e. equal rights at Law and the Assembly. By the term citizen the Athenians understood, a person who not only voted but took his turn, by lot and vote, as magistrate or judge; he must be free, ready and able to serve the state at any time. Every voter was of right a member of the basic Governing Body—the *Ecclesia* or the Assembly, there was at this level no representative government, it was direct democracy. The Assembly met four times a month, the members sat on benches under open sky and the sittings began at dawn. Only trained orators would venture to speak in the Assembly for it was a difficult audience. "It laughs at mispronunciations, protests aloud at digressions, expresses its approval with shouts, whistling and clapping of hands, and if it strongly disapproves, makes such a din that the speaker is compelled to leave the *bema* or rostrum." Voting was normally by show of hands except in cases where any individual was directly and

*Archonship
extended to
the third and
the fourth
classes*

*Periclean
ideal of
Athenian
citizenship*

*The
Assembly,
i.e. Ecclesia*

specially involved, in which case secret ballot would be taken.

*Council, i.e.
Boule*

Above the Assembly in dignity but far below it in power was the Council or the *Boule* which by the time of Pericles was reduced in effect to a legislative committee of the *Ecclesia*. Its members were chosen by lot and vote, fifty from each of the ten tribes. Its functions were legislative, executive and consultative. It examined and altered if necessary, the bills proposed to the Assembly, supervised the conduct and accounts of the religious and administrative officials, controlled the finances, buildings and had the power to issue executive decrees when the Assembly was not in session, subject to the later approval by the Assembly. The *Boule* also controlled the foreign affairs of the state. As before fifty members of the *Boule* would preside over the *Boule* and the Assembly for thirty-six days by turn.

*Payment to
officers*

Pericles, as we have seen, introduced lot in the widest sense and arranged for payment to officers. Extension of lot to all the different classes of the people meant that poor would also have chances of being selected as magistrates. But without payment they would not be in a position to render public service neglecting their normal avocation of life. Payment to them, therefore, was a big step in making democracy real. This naturally won Pericles immense popularity with the masses; specially when payment was adopted in the popular courts of justice. Pericles became all the more popular. At the time when Pericles reduced the powers of the Areopagus, he introduced the rule of making payments to the judges. This facilitated supply of sufficient number of judges that became necessary for the growing number of cases and even the poor could now find it possible to empanelled as judges.

*Law Court:
Heliaea*

The greatest reform accomplished by Ephialtes and Pericles was the transfer of the judicial powers of the Areopagus to the *heliaea*, i.e. a committee of the *Ecclesia* or the Assembly. The *heliaea* comprised six thousand dicasts or jurors usually drawn by lot from

the citizens. These were divided into ten *dicasteries* or panels. No citizen could serve as a dicast or a juror for more than a year at a stretch. This necessitated eligibility for selection by lot by rotation which gave every citizen the average chance of becoming a juror every third year. Payment for serving as juror was resorted to. 'Despite expedition, the courts of Athens, like courts the world over, are usually behind their calendar, for the Athenians itch to litigate.' Penalties took the form of flogging, fines, disfranchisement, branding, confiscation exile and death; imprisonment was seldom ordered as a punishment.

Such was the Athenian democracy—"the narrowest and fullest in history: narrowest in the number of those who share its privileges, fullest in the directness and equality with which all the citizens control legislation, and administer public affairs."

Athenian laws comprised two parts *thesmoi*, i.e. long standing sacred usages, and *nomoi*, i.e. man-made laws. When *thesmoi* were reduced into writing as under Draco, Solon, etc., these became *nomoi*. The tendency to free law from religion and to make them more and more secular can be traced from the time of Draco. Family liability was replaced by individual responsibility and private personal revenge was replaced by statutory punishment. Legal confusion was resolved by a committee of *nomothetae* or law determiners who were chosen by lot. There was no distinction between civil and criminal codes except that cases of homicide were reserved for the Areopagus. Below the Areopagus there were tribunals for homicidal cases. The law of property was uncompromisingly severe, the jurors were required to swear not to vote for an abolition of private debts or for distribution of lands or houses belonging to the Athenians. Bequeathing of property by will was very much in the same nature in the days of Pericles as in our days.

*Athenian
laws*

Judging the time when reforms were carried out,

Criticism:

it has been remarked by many that the 'Athenian constitution was a perfect democracy'. Yet certain points often lost sight of in the praise of Athenian democracy as it emerged after the reforms of Ephialtes and Pericles have been pointed out by A. Holm which may be regarded as specially good points in favour of the Athenian constitution. In the first place, the people did not have the right to be able to make laws at their sweet will and pleasure, they only adopted definite resolutions on the motion of a citizen who assumed responsibility for the measure proposed by him. This served as a check on reckless legislation. The Athenian constitution rightly held that the proposer of any law should undertake greater responsibility than who adopt it or reject it by their votes. 'Democracy without responsibility on the part of the mover of a resolution did not meet with their approval. This is the key to many peculiarities of the Athenian political life.' This personal responsibility explains the condemnation of Miltiades, downfall of many another leader, ostracism of many. This principle of personal responsibility is also there in modern democracies where the highest person in the state is liable to impeachment. The 'Periclean system' remarks Holm, 'which contained a marked socialistic element, and was afterwards initiated in Rome, did not endure long after the death of Pericles.' Again the financial burden of the state was laid upon the rich only. This came as an excellent relief of the poor.

Two specialities about Athenian Democracy

Personal responsibility

Socialistic element

Payments made for cowardice and idling

Laws of citizenship were narrow

Yet Periclean laws and reforms did not escape criticism. His system of payment to state officials, judges, jurors and members of the Council and Assembly was criticised by Plato, who thought, this had made the Athenians cowardly and idle, talkative and grasping. Further, Pericles' law of citizenship restricting the Athenian citizenship to only such children as were born of Athenian father and mother legitimately wedded has been roundly criticised. Again, in cases of a political character the judges of *Heliaea* were swayed

by their political opinion as also by the eloquence of the pleaders working upon their emotions because they were chosen not on merits nor their possession of legal acumen.

*Heliaea
influenced by
political
ideas and
eloquence
of pleaders*

But it may be pointed out that the idea of Greek city-states could not have been overlooked by any reformer. This was an ingrained feature of the Greeks as a race. Naturally, Pericles with his ideal of an Athenian empire to subserve, had to make the constitution completely democratic in order to give it that broad base which was imperative to lead a city-state to an imperial career. This needed relief to the poor by way of payment for their work, failure to recognise which would have left out the common people from the enthusiasm needed for an imperial career. This was also the background cause of restricting Athenian citizenship to strictly Athenian parents thereby making Athenian citizenship itself a matter of distinction. This was also the case with Roman citizenship later in Rome. The agility and enthusiasm, creative activities and cultural excellence in the Periclean age perhaps take away the charge of cowardice and idleness, etc. Cowards and idlers will always be there in every country and every nation, the question is whether Periclean reforms had converted the Athenians into a nation of cowards or idlers. This they were certainly not. As Grote remarks: "The Athenian people were at this time ready for personal exertion in all directions: Military service on land or sea was not less comfortable to their dispositions than attendance at the *Ecclesia* or in the dicastery at home." With regard to the charge of extra-judicial influence that determined law suits rather than a sense of justice, it must be said that there was indeed scope for misjudgement of facts of cases. But this was not worse than the king's anger in monarchical states where to contest the king was to reckon with the king's police or the army or at least to get the judgement always and invariably in favour of the king. After all, the judicial reforms

*Criticism
refuted*

effected in Athens by Pericles and Ephialtes, gave to a large portion of the citizens direct jury functions and an active interest in the constitution that they had never enjoyed before. The change marked the growth of democracy in Athens and served as a cause of its further development in the future.

CHAPTER 7

Athens under Pericles

1/**Changed Athenian Foreign Policy :** Foreign policy of Athens underwent a complete change after the ostracism of Cimon. Alliance with Lacedaemon was abandoned and a new alliance with her enemies, Argos and Thessaly was struck (458 B.C.). So far Athens was not brought into direct collision with Sparta. But her alliance with Argos and Thessaly forced her into deadly rivalry with two of Sparta's allies—Corinth and Aegina. The naval empire of Athens and the growth of her sea power naturally led to rapid expansion of her trade and commerce and new visions of commercial ambition within the borders of Greece were opening. It became likely that Athens would soon outstrip her two commercial rivals Corinth and Aegina in commercial traffic. When competition of Athenian merchants with Corinth was actively going on, an Athenian general took Naupactus from the Locrians which secured for Athens a naval station giving her a great control over the mouth of the Corinthian Gulf. Athens could now easily intercept and harass Corinthian merchant ships which sailed to the far west. An open conflict was inevitable between these two rivals naturally.

*Change in
Athenian
policy:
Alliance with
Sparta's
enemies—
Argos and
Thessaly*

*Commercial
rivalry with
Corinth and
Aegina*

Not many months after, Megara, a member of the Peloponnesian League under Sparta's leadership had left the league because of a border dispute with Corinth and sought Athenian protection. Megara commanded the isthmus from Pagae on the Corinthian bay to Nisaea on the Saronic bay. With Megara as an ally Athens would have a strong frontier against Peloponnesus. Athens lost no time in constructing a double line of wall from the Megarian hills to the port of Nisaea and garrisoned these with her own troops.

*Megara
under
Athenian
protection*

Long walls

This gave her protection against invasion by land and brought the eastern coast-road* under her control.

*Battle of
Halieis*

*Battle of
Cecryphalea*

*Battle of
Aegina*

*Battle of
Megarid*

*Egyptian
expedition by
Athens*

*Invitation
by Inaros*

Occupation of Megara was considered a direct affront and offence to Sparta, the leader of the Peloponnesian League and more specially to Corinth. The latter declared war against Athens. Sparta, however, kept aloof to begin with. The Athenians were defeated upon their descent on Halieis at the hands of combined Corinthian and Epidaurian troops. At this stage the Peloponnesian fleet under Sparta engaged the Athenians in a naval conflict only to be defeated at Cecryphalea. Aegina now joined the war out of the fear that defeat of Corinth would seal her fate and Athens would become the mistress in the Saronic sea. The result was a great naval battle near Aegina in which Athens became victorious and took possession of seventy enemy ships and blockaded Aegina. The Peloponnesians sent a force to assist the Aeginians. But in the battle of Megarid both sides claimed victory and when the Corinthians withdrew the Athenians raised a trophy. Thereupon the Corinthians returned to raise a counter trophy but they were now completely defeated by the Athenians. Thus the battle which was at first indecisive was decided in favour of Athens.

The result of Athenian victories was that she was about to be brought face to face with the armed opposition of rival Greek powers. Just about this time Athens embarked upon an enterprise beyond the limits of the Greek world. She sent an expedition to Egypt. On the call of Inaros, a Lybian king 200 Athenian galleys crossed over to Egypt. Inaros had stirred up a revolt in the lower Nile against their Persian masters. This was done taking advantage of the unsettled situation at the Persian Court on the murder of Xerxes and Artaxerxes had not yet been firmly on the Persian throne. Athens saw in the deliverance of Egypt from the Persian yoke Athenian control of trade with the Nile valley and a naval base on the coast.

"The Egyptian expedition was an attempt to carry the struggle with Persia into another stage—a stage in which Greece is the aggressor and invader." It would also mean avenging the Persian invasion of Greece, and it anticipated Alexander the Great.

The Athenians captured Memphis but "after this achievement we lose sight of war in Egypt for two years." In the mean time when the Athenian fleet was on the bank of the Nile, Corinth, Aegina and their allies attacked Athens. But thanks to the Athenian spirit the attack was repelled. Aegina was laid under a siege by the Athenians which ultimately capitulated and she was enrolled in the Confederacy of Delos.

In the mean time Sparta also got involved in a war in another part of Greece. Under the influence of the alarm now spread by the proceedings of Athens, the Spartans were prevailed upon to undertake an expedition out of Peloponnesus, although the helots in Ithome were not yet reduced to surrender. The ostensible motive or the pretence for this expedition was the protection of the small territory of Doris against the Phocians, who had recently invaded and taken one of its three towns. The approach of so large a force compelled the Phocians to restore the conquest. But it now became manifest that succour to Doris was only a small part of the objects of Sparta; the main purpose, under instigation of Corinthians, was to arrest the aggrandisement of Athens. It could not escape the penetration of Corinth that Athenians might constrain the towns of Boeotia into her alliance as she had recently acquired Megara in addition to her previous ally Plataea. Such a chance was very great for the Boeotian federation was at this time much disorganised, and Thebes the chief of the Boeotian federation never recovered her ascendancy over the Boeotian cities since the discredit of her support lent to Persian invasion. The Peloponnesian force was, therefore, employed partly to enlarge and strengthen the fortifications of Thebes itself, and partly in compelling the

Invasion of Alexander the Great anticipated

No knowledge of Egyptian expedition: Combined attack by Corinth and Aegina repulsed—Aegina enrolled member of the Confederacy of Delos

Sparta involved in war in Boeotia

Corinthian instigation

Restoration of Theban leadership in Boeotia

other Boeotian cities into effective obedience to Theban supremacy.

*Athenian
Oligarch's
secret design*

But there was also a further design, yet more important, contemplated by the Spartans and the Corinthians. The Oligarchical opposition at Athens was bitterly hostile to Pericles, the Long Walls and to the democratical movement and it was in secret negotiations with the Peloponnesian leaders inviting them to Attica assuring them of an internal rising. But the Athenian leaders, aware of the Spartan operations in Boeotia, knew also what was meant by the presence of the Peloponnesian army on their borders. When the Peloponnesian army had done its work at Boeotia its return to Peloponnesus was beset with difficulties, for the Megarid passes were held by the Athenians while the Athenian fleet was on the watch over the Corinthian gulf. In this embarrassment the Peloponnesian army decided to march straight upon Athens where people were now engaged in building of Long Walls from the city to the harbour. The Peloponnesian army advanced to Tanagra near the Attic frontier. Having obtained a reinforcement of one thousand Argeians and some Thessalian horse the Athenian army marched out to Tanagra. Cimon the exiled Athenian statesman and patriot is said to have come and offered assistance to the Athenians forces against the Peloponnesians. But this offer was rejected on a reference to the Athenian Council of Five Hundred. The engagement was protracted and there was terrible slaughter on both sides. The battle was eventually lost by the Athenians. But although victory was won by the Lacedaemonians yet it saved Athens as well, for the victors were now only enabled to return by the Isthmus of Corinth. The victory was not sufficiently decisive to encourage Sparta to march on Athens itself or to interfere with the building of the Long Walls.

*Pelopon-
nesians
reach
upon Athens:
Battle of
Tanagra*

*Athenian
defeat*

The battle of Tanagra was a* defeat, yet there were circumstances connected with it which rendered

its effects highly beneficial to Athens. Cimon's offer of assistance having been rejected Pericles thought it incumbent upon him to display not merely his ordinary personal courage but an unusual recklessness of life and safety, though it happened that he escaped unwounded. All this brought about a spirit of compromise among the contending parties in Athens and the unshaken patriotism of Cimon and his friends disarmed those conspirators who had entered into correspondence with the enemy. Such was the happy working of sentiments that Cimon's ten years of ostracism was abridged and he was permitted to return. So powerful was the burst of patriotism and unanimity after the battle of Tanagra which produced the recall of Cimon that the pre-existing conspiracy with the enemy was wiped out and about two months after Tanagra the Athenians undertook an aggressive march under Myronides into Boeotia. In the battle of Oenophyta (457 B.C.) the Athenians succeeded in becoming masters of whole of Boeotia except Thebes. All arrangements recently made by Sparta were reversed and democratic governments were established forcing the aristocrats with Lacedaemonian connection to become exiles. Nor was only Boeotia Athens thus acquired, Phocis and Locris were also successively added to the list of her dependent allies. Athens could now quietly complete the building of her long walls. These brilliant successes were crowned by the capture of Aegina and Troezen but the Athenian arms were not so prosperous in the far south. The Greeks were driven out of Memphis and shut them up in the island of Prosopitis for long eighteen months after which they capitulated to the Persian commander Megabyzus and were finally allowed to depart. A relief squadron of fifty triremes were sent from Athens but was destroyed by the Phoenician fleet in the Mendesian mouth of the Nile, only a few ships escaped. Persian authority was restored in Egypt.

Although the Egyptian enterprise proved a failure, yet the fact remained that the Athenian empire was at

*Defeat at
Tanagra
beneficial
to Athenians*

*Battle of
Oenophyta
(457 B.C.)*

*Athenian
gains*

*Failure of
of Egyptian
expedition*

*Delian
confederacy
converted into
an Athenian
empire*

*Athenian
empire*

*Saronic Bay
almost an
Athenian
Lake*

*Corinth
hemmed in on
both sides*

*Achaean
cities join
Athenian
alliance*

*Achaea
becomes an
Athenian
dependency*

*Five Years'
Truce*

the height of its power. The Athenian disaster in Egypt served as a pretext for conversion of the Delian confederacy into an Athenian Empire. Lest the triumphant Phoenician fleet would sail into the Athenian Sea, Delos was not considered safe for the treasury of the confederacy and it was removed to Athens. The Athenian empire now comprised both continental and maritime dominions. Boeotia and Megara were now her subjects and in Boeotia Athenian dominion extended over Phocis and Locris and to the Pass of Thermopylae. Over Argos Athens' influence was predominant, Aegina had been added to the Athenian empire, her ships joined the Athenian navy. Occupation of Megara, Aegina and Troezen converted the Saronic Bay almost into an Athenian Lake.

The commercial city of Corinth was the chief and the most dangerous enemy of Athens and naturally, the next object of Pericles' policy was to convert the Corinthian gulf into another Athenian lake so that Corinth might be hemmed in on both her sides. Athens was already in control of the northern shores of the gulf due to her possession of Megara, Boeotia and specially Naupactus, but the southern sea board was still Peloponnesian. Further, on the Acarnian coast certain posts were to be secured. Egyptian general Tolmides began the process by capturing Chalcis, a Corinthian colony and Pericles himself conducted an expedition to continue the work of Tolmides. Pericles' enterprise failed yet it created a sensation and a fear complex and it seemed that Achaean cities were willing to enter into an Athenian alliance. Between 453 and 446 Achaea became an Athenian dependency, thus making it possible, at least for a few years, for the Athenian fleet to sail in both the Saronic Bay and Corinthian Gulf with a sense of dominion.

Continuous warfare and specially the Egyptian expedition put enormous strain on the resources of Athens although the latter proved beneficial by the way that Athens had now greater control of the

tributes of the allies. Yet a relief from the strain was badly needed. The victory of Tanagra on the other hand did not mean much for the Lacedaemonians except an easy return to their home. After this victory Lacedaemon, i.e. Sparta made no further expeditions out of Peloponnesus for several succeeding years, nor even tried to prevent Athenian expansion in Boeotia and Phocis. This remissness was due to (i) the general nature of the Lacedaemonian character which was lethargic, (ii) the Athenians were the masters of the Megarid and controlled the road over the high lands of Ceranea, and could therefore obstruct the march of any army out from Peloponnesus, and (iii) the siege of Ithome which was in revolt still continued. Even after the surrender of Ithome, the Lacedaemonians remained inactive for three more years when *Five Years' Truce* with Athens was signed. This truce was concluded in a degree through the influence of Cimon, who was eager to resume operations against the Persians. It was not less suitable to the political interest of Pericles that his most distinguished rival should be absent on foreign service and did not interfere with his influence at home.

*Remissness
on the part of
the Lacedae-
monians*

*Cimon
negotiates
Five Years'
Truce*

Near about the same time Lacedaemon and Argos concluded a peace for Thirty Years. The peace so arranged enabled Athens and her allies to resume their warfare against Persia and Cimon was selected to lead the expedition. Cyprus was the object of operation and Cimon led a squadron of 200 vessels. The Persians had sent the Phoenician fleet earlier to re-establish their authority in Cyprus. But as the Athenians still hoped to conquer Egypt should opportunity offered itself, sixty ships were lent in support of a prince in the Nile Delta, who had defied Persian authority. Cimon blockaded Cition during which he died. His death marked the beginning of a new period in which hostilities between the Greeks and the Persians began to slumber. The siege of Cition was raised, but the Greek fleet arriving off Salamis gained a double victory over

*Thirty years'
peace between
Sparta and
Argos*

*Cimon's
expedition to
Cyprus*

*Siege of
Cition:
Cimon's death
(450-49)*

Choice between peace with Persia and peace with Greece

the Phoenicians and Cilician ships. Yet these victories did not encourage the Athenians to continue war against Persia. The situation of the time made it sufficiently clear to the Athenian statesmen that it would be extremely hazardous to fight on two fronts—against Persia, the common enemy of all Greeks and against a section of the Greeks themselves, simultaneously. 'It was therefore necessary to choose between peace with Persia and peace with Greece.' Yet whereas it was possible to make peace with Persia simply by abandoning the ambition of occupying Persian dominions in Egypt and particularly because the Greek victory of Cyprian Salamis had been followed by a revolt of Magabyzus and the Persian Emperor Artaxerxes was willing for peace, peace with Greece could only be achieved by surrendering all places lately gained by Athens. Corinth would not acquiesce until she won back her predominant position in her western gulf. Pericles' statesmanship aimed at increasing political influence of Athens within Greece. He was unwilling to sacrifice his new acquisitions or any part thereof for the sake of earning successes against the barbarians. Peace was therefore made with Persia. Nothing is known of the negotiations for peace but it is presumed that Persia undertook not to send warships into the Aegean sea while Athens pledged not to attack the coasts of the Persian empire. By the terms of the peace Athens resigned her claim on Cyprus. This was called the Peace of Callias presumably because Callias, the richest man of Athens was the chief ambassador.

Peace with Persia

Peace of Callias

Falling away of some of the Boeotian possessions of Athens

Peace with Persia did not mean any further extension of her territories within Greece, on the contrary some of the recent acquisitions began to fall away. The exiled oligarchs recovered their possession of Orchomenus and Chaeronea and some other towns in Western Boeotia. Tolmides was sent to combat the situation. He occupied Chaeronea but with his inadequate number of troops did not venture to recover

Orchomenus. On his way home he was set upon by the exiles of Orchomenus and defeated and many of his troops taken prisoners in the battle of Coronea. Boeotia had to be resigned, thereby the work done at Oenophyta was undone by Coronea.

*Battle of
Coronea
(447 B.C.)*

Loss of Boeotia was not wholly unwelcome to Athens, for the strain of maintaining authority over it and the lack of consolidation for geographical reasons, of Boeotia with the Athenian possessions had been too difficult to overcome. Unremunerative as Athenian occupation of Boeotian cities had been, their falling away from the Athenian empire saved the latter from a constant strain on her military and economic resources. But strange although it seemed, Phocis and Locris deserted her ally Athens. When Phocis took possession of Delphi the Spartans forced the Phocians to restore it to the Delphians. But after the withdrawal of the Spartan troops, the Athenians helped Phocis to recover Delphi. All this took place in such a way as would not make any breach of the Five Years' Truce. But Phocis instead of gratitude, proved to be a deserter and broke away from Athenian alliance, obviously because of an oligarchical reaction which gathered momentum in Phocis in the wake of oligarchical restoration in Boeotian cities. The oligarchical movement which thus triumphed in central Greece was widening its eddies eastwards and southwards. Euboea, an Athenian ally of thirty years' standing revolted in 446 B.C. Pericles' landing in the island of Euboea for the suppression of the revolt was immediately followed by a rising in Megara in which the Athenian garrison stationed there was cut into pieces, the few survivors, however, succeeded in holding Pegae and Nisaea. Reinforcement was sent to Megara and Pericles also was about to join it. But a Lacedaemonian army under Pleistoanax stood between the two. The Athenian reinforcement, however, succeeded in getting into Boeotia and thence back to Athens. Pleistoanax advanced up to Eleusis and thence withdrew. He was

*Loss of
Boeotia not
wholly un-
welcome to
Athens*

*Falling away
of Phocis and
Locris*

*Revolt in
Euboea
(446 B.C.)*

*Megara in
revolt*

*Reduction of
Euboea*

suspected to have received bribes for this withdrawal. Whatever might have been the reason, it left Pericles free to deal with Euboea. The island was reduced, people of Histiaea were expelled and their lands distributed among Athenian settlers and a new Athenian colony (cleruchy) called Oreos took the place of Histiaea. The whole island of Euboea was reduced to a tribute paying subject ally of Athens.

*Reduction of
tributes*

The wholesale defection of the allies produced a deep impression on the Athenians which was reflected in the revision of the tributes which was made in 446–45 B.C. Many subject allies had their tributes reduced. In the mean time the *Five Years' Truce* with Sparta was approaching termination and this added to the anxieties of Athens. It was felt that peace must be maintained with Sparta at all costs. In the winter of 446 B.C. a *Thirty Years' Peace* was concluded between Athens and Sparta. (i) The Athenians renounced all their Peloponnesian possessions, viz. Pegae, Nisaea, Troezen and Achaëa. For therest each side retained what it had. (ii) All allies of both sides were listed in the peace treaty and it was agreed that neither city was to receive into alliance any ally of the other. (iii) But neutral states, that is the states which were independent of both, might join whichever of the two they pleased. (iv) Differences between the two parties to the peace were to be settled by arbitration. (v) Aegina was to continue as a tributary to Athens but with guaranteed autonomy. Naupactus was also retained by Athens. (vi) Argos which was already bound by the terms of *Thirty Years' Truce* with Sparta was declared free to enter into alliance with Athens.

*Thirty Years'
Peace between
Athens and
Sparta
(446–45
B.C.)*

The *Thirty Years' Peace* was as humiliating to Athens as it was significant of the alarm caused by the Peloponnesian inroads into Athenian territory. While loss of Boeotia was an indirect gain in the sense that its security was a constant headache and source of financial burden, the loss of Megara or Megarid was a terrible blow because of strategic reasons. Loss of Megara

*Impact of the
Thirty Years'
Peace on the
Athenians*

exposed Athens to aggression. The lesson of the warfare culminating into the *Thirty Years' Peace* was that Athens must devote her energy to maintain her maritime empire. Her attempt at building a land-empire succeeded for a very small span of time. The spirit of the Athenians was fast drooping and it needed all the tact and persuasive eloquence of Pericles to whip it up again and restore the shaken confidence. The vision of an expanded Athenian maritime empire was held out to remove the despondency among the Athenians. "Of the two divisions of the world accessible to man, the land and the sea, there is one of which you are absolute masters, or have or may have the dominion to any extent you please. Neither the Great King nor any nation on earth can hinder a navy like yours from penetrating whithersoever you choose to sail." Such were the words of Pericles to the Athenians at a later moment of despondency.

2/Pericles : Periclean Imperialism : When Cimon was gaining renown abroad, he had rivals at home who were endeavouring to supplant him in the affection of the people and to initiate a domestic and foreign policy directly counter to his views, and were preparing for a contest for him in which his military genius stood him in no good stead. While elderly statesman like Themistocles and Aristides were holding the field, an extraordinary genius was ripening in obscurity to issue from shade into the broad day of public life at a favourable juncture. This was Pericles, the younger of the two sons of Xanthippus, the commander of the Athenian fleet at the battle of Mycale and of Agariste, niece of Cleisthenes the reformer. Pericles, to an observing eye, gave early indications of a mind destined for great things and a will earnestly bent on them. Two teachers who left an abiding influence on him and to whose influence he owed most were the musician Damonides and Philosopher Anaxagoras. Not content with ordinary education that was generally obtainable in Greece, Pericles

*Rise of
Pericles*

His education

*Influence of
Damonides,
Anaxagoras,
Pythoclides,
Zeno, etc.*

His abilities

*Failure of
foreign policy
up to Thirty
Years' Peace*

applied himself assiduously, despite his public avocations, to intellectual pursuit which was confined to a very narrow circle of inquisitive spirits in Athens then. His wealth and parentage afforded him the means of familiar intercourse with most of the eminent persons in the field of knowledge and art, who were resorting to Athens as a common seat of learning. Among the persons, besides Damonides and Anaxagoras, he received lessons from Pythoclides, Zeno and others. But Philosopher Anaxagoras appears to have exercised the most powerful and durable influence on his mind and character, while Damonides developed in him a bias for democracy. Temperamentally he was an aristocrat rather than a commoner, he was reserved, shy of society, ostentatiously devoted to public duty and when his authority became unassailable brutally frank and truthful. He was never a demagogue but as a speaker ranked by his contemporaries as unrivalled in persuasive eloquence. There have never been better judges of oratory than the Athenians of Periclean Age and in their verdict Pericles was a mighty speaker and his eloquence was not one of clear expression alone but the outcome of clear thought as well. His love of art was as unquestioned as his democratic professions. As a military commander he was nothing extraordinary and could never claim to be ranked with Cimon, Myronides or Alcibiades. "His foreign policy, down to the conclusion of the *Thirty Years' Peace* was based on a miscalculation, both of the resources of Athens, and of the attractive power of the democratic ideal; in spite of its initial successes, it brought Athens to the brink of Abyss. It was in his domestic rather than in his foreign policy that his genius stood revealed." Democracy insofar as it meant government by the people and for the people, the Athenian constitution as created by the intellect of Pericles was certainly the most complete. Yet it was this constitution that proved Athens' undoing in the long run.

The question naturally arises as to why Pericles

should be regarded as great and on what should his claim to greatness rest. As Walker (Camb. V) points out, the greatness of Pericles was inseparable from the greatness of Athens. In an age when the whole energy of the Athenian society, a society perhaps the most gifted known to history, was consciously directed to a given end by a single will, Pericles' claim rests on having given that singleness of will, unity of purpose and boldness of direction which made Athens what it was in the Periclean Age. Without Pericles, the debt of the posterity to Athens would have been far less.

*Pericles'
greatness*

The Thirty Years' Peace made Pericles, with whom the conduct of the foreign policy lay, conscious of the fact that it was no longer possible to maintain both the overseas empire of Athens and her acquisition Greece proper. Neither the man power of Athens nor the contingents of the Empire could face the Peloponnesian League. She was, however, invincible on sea but even at that she could not defend Megara or Troezen or Achaea. Pericles, therefore, decided to hold no more than what could be held with safety. The Thirty Years' Peace recognised the Athenian Empire and bound the Peloponnesians to abstain from interfering in the affairs of the states listed as the allies of Athens. The latter had to obey the same condition in respect of the confederates of Sparta. Thus Greece reverted to the old dualism between Athens predominant by sea and Sparta predominant by land.

*Reversion to
old dualism
between
Athens, a
maritime
power and
Sparta, a
land power*

The Thirty Years' Peace left Athens free to exact the payment of the tributes by her subject allies to the full. The revenue of the empire was enough to maintain a fleet to police the Aegean and conserve naval skill. 'Pericles believed that the spiritual greatness of Athens was rooted in her political power' and the imperial conscience of Pericles did not hesitate to sacrifice the virtue of honesty to teach the allies the virtue of gratitude, for it was Athens who had saved them during the Persian War and she could legitimately claim reward. Full tribute that was extorted was spent

*Extortion of
tributes from
the subject
allies*

in part on great buildings which brought splendour to Athens and employment to many.

*Oligarchical
opposition to
Pericles—
Ostracism of
Thucydides*

But Pericles' policy met with severe opposition. Parthenon, the visible symbol of Athenian greatness, was under construction since 447 B.C. But by 444 B.C. the Athenian treasury could no longer meet the expenditure and it was therefore necessary to divert the accumulated balance of the tributes from the empire. The oligarchical opposition to Pericles led by Thucydides son of Melesias (not historian Thucydides) attacked the proposal on principle of morality. Athens had no moral rights to 'deck herself like a courtesan with thousand talent temples'. Pericles staked his career against that of his opponent and in 443 B.C. the Athenians voted which of the two leaders Pericles or Thucydides would have their confidence. Thucydides was ostracised and that left Pericles the unquestioned leader of the Athenian democracy.

*Pericles' Pan-
Hellenic
Congress
—plan
failed*

Earlier in 449 B.C. on the motion of Pericles Athens addressed to the Greek world invitation to a Pan-Hellenic Congress for the purpose of discussing certain matters of common interest but the proposal did not succeed due to Spartan opposition. But Pericles' policy of retaining her empire resources for the maintenance of her fleet and of rebuilding of temples from the common funds because these were burnt in the common cause met with fierce opposition which quietened down on the ostracism of Thucydides. After all Pericles' claim that Athens had a right to use the money of her allies whom she had afforded protection, and his ambitious building programme which would bring splendour to the city and profitable employment for the workers and wages to many were too popular to be defeated on a vote.

*Opposition in
the empire*

In the empire Pericles' policy met with no less serious opposition. In 449–48 B.C. no tribute seemed to have been realised. Even in the year following 448–47 B.C.) a considerable number of cities brought

no tributes. The list of tributes of this year gave clear indication of widespread discontent. Athenian reaction was vigorous. Collection was tightened up, defaulted amounts were realised with the current tribute.

Further, with greater organisation of democracy in Athens for sharing the spoils of the empire, there was also greater need for organising the empire to produce the spoils. For the purposes of tribute Pericles divided the cities into five groups: *Ionia, Hellespont, Thracian regions, Cavia* and the *Islands*. This division facilitated control of payments of the tributes. This was a domination suggestive of the Persian satrapies imposed upon what had been a voluntary alliance of free Greek cities. But Periclean conscience had no qualms; his policy was 'to keep the allies in hand'.

*Reorganisa-
tion of the
empire*

By a decree Pericles made the use of Athenian weights and measures and Athenian coins compulsory in most part of the empire. Athenian coins were to be purchased along with goods in the Athenian market. It goes without saying that this decree furthered the economic dominance of Athens over the empire. These apart, an Athenian garrison was to be stationed in each city under control.

*Economic
dominance of
Athens over
the empire*

Such was the value set at Athenian citizenship that and old law of 451 B.C. was revived and civic rights were limited to those born of Athenian citizens both on father and mother's sides. The result was that about 5,000 persons were struck off the list of citizens.

*Enhanced
value of
Athenian
citizenship*

Vigour of Athens roused admiration and jealousy perhaps among her neighbours and her friendship was deemed worth purchasing. Lybian prince Psammetichus made a gift of 45,000 bushels of corn for distribution among Athenian citizens, perhaps out of the political consideration of a possible help in the event of a Persian attack.

The building of the Parthenon in the mean time went on and in nine years' time it became ready to

*Added
splendour of
the city*

receive the statue of the goddess made of gold and ivory, the masterpiece of Pheidias. The sanctuary for the mysteries at Eleusis was rebuilt on a much grander scale by Ictinus who was the architect of Parthenon. The building of Propylae was also commenced. The Odeum, a new building was constructed for the needs of the musical festival. 'Athens became daily more splendid and also more nearly what Pericles called it, the *School of Hellas*.'

*Military
construction*

*Naval
expansion*

*Naval and
Mercantile
harbours*

*Symmetrical
town planning*

*Building of
war reserve
fund*

*Cautious
colonial
adventurism*

Constructions that added to the military strength of the city were no less remarkable. A third Long Wall was built parallel to the two which already existed. This new wall made the whole system more defensible. The war-harbours at Piraeus were organised and equipped and triremes were housed in fine new sheds. The popularity of expansion of the navy has been described by Aristophanes by mentioning the huge gatherings at the times of launching every new squadron. Mercantile harbours were also provided for coping with the increased volume of trade. Town planning expert Hippodamus' services were used for giving symmetry to new constructions. These were all completed within ten years of the Peace and Pericles now turned his attention to the building up of a war reserve fund, but for the time being what Athens needed was peace.

In one sphere Athens found an opportunity for adventurism. Athenian colonists went out with Greeks of other cities to Southern Italy to supplement the Greek colonies at Sybaris. The surviving Greeks of the previous colonising attempt at Sybaris claimed special privilege over the new colonists. But they were driven out. The new settlers were left with more land than they could manage. They appealed to Athens to seize the opportunity of establishing an Athenian imperial outpost in South Italy with a view to expanding Athenian empire there. But Pericles did not feel like venturing on a provocative colonial policy and regarded it a fit case for all Greeks to fit out

a second expedition. Only two-fifths of the new colonists were from Athens and her empire. Athens built the city of Thurii but would not precipitate any conflict with other Greek states nor did she possess the surplus population willing to emigrate. In Sicily, Syracuse an ally of Corinth and a potential enemy of Athens, started building a great navy. Even this did not provoke Pericles to give up his policy of defensive and watchful quietism. He was content with a promise of support to Rhegium and Leontini in the event of a Syracusan attack.

*Building of
Thurii*

*Promise of
support to
Leontini*

But in 441 B.C. Samos which like Lesbos and Chios, although within the Athenian empire possessed both independence and a fleet attempted open secession and sought Persian help. Pericles personally set out with a fleet and established in Samos a pro-Athenian democracy in place of oligarchy. But with his withdrawal situation was reversed and Athenian garrison was compelled to surrender. Pericles again set out with a fleet of sixty triremes but failing to win a decisive victory requisitioned reinforcement from Athens, Chios and Lesbos. The only hope of the Samians lay in the Persian assistance which did not arrive. Persia simply dared not to strike at Athens. Samian appeal to Sparta and the Peloponnesians was discussed but certainly not with seriousness, and Corinth, on her own admission a few years later, had advised peace. Nothing came out of the appeal. The cities of the Athenian empire remained quiet except Byzantium and some disorders in Thracian chersonese. On the surrender of Samos, Byzantium quietened down. Athens weathered a severe crisis and stood unshaken, her finances bore the strain. Athens now ranged her policy further afield. She now planted more *cleruchies*, i.e. settlements of Athenian citizens at important strategic and commercial points of her empire.

*Revolt of
Samos*

*Athens
weathers the
crisis*

Athens now at peace, sought to revive and increase her commercial interests in the cities on the coasts of the Black Sea where lay inexhaustible supplies of

*Import of
food:
Commercial
intercourse*

staple food of the Greeks, bread and fish. The Athenian *cleruchies* besides having been so many strategic garrisons, also did much to relieve the pressure of population in the mother city by feeding its population. The Athenian settlers in the chersonese and in Lemnos, Imbros and Euboea deserve mention in this respect. Export of Attic pottery to Cimmerian Bosphorus—modern Crimea brought food from the corn-barons of that country. Food also arrived from the corn-lands of South Russia.

*Athens at the
summer of her
greatness*

Such were the attempts of Pericles to strengthen and consolidate Athenian power within the empire and secure the food and promote the trade of Athens. The days 'when Athens faced Persia and half Greece in arms, had passed', now was the high summer of Athenian greatness and as Pericles remarked (Thucydides puts it into Pericles' mouth) "all mortal power is doomed to decline, but the memory of greatness stands for ever."

*Pericles stands
supreme*

In matters of state Pericles stood supreme. He had outlasted all possible rivals—Cimon, Tolmides and Thucydides, son of Melesias. He had been voted General-in-chief for fifteen times in succession. His policy was steady and far-sighted. 'The age of adventures were over, now came a quiet, determined increase of influence, prestige and financial strength against an evil day. The Athenian fleet was kept efficient by constant practice and every summer a squadron took the sea and displayed the invincible power of Athens.'

*Popularity of
Pericles'
policy*

Naturally, Pericles' policy lured the Athenian citizens, for 'so long as the profits of empire were many and its burdens light, the Athenian democracy would feel few searchings of heart in adopting the imperialism of Pericles'.

*Lofty
imperialism
of Pericles*

Pericles' policy did not simply aim at political dominion of the Hellas, he would like the union of all Greeks, a union held together by the power of Athens

having a natural support in community of religion, language, customs and traditions. Athens of his dream was to be the intellectual nerve centre of the whole of Hellas, *mistress of the Hellas* wherefrom would percolate refining influences of art, literature and culture. The deftly adorned city of Athens with noble specimens of art and architecture was to be the Queen of Hellas and the instructress of Hellas as well. Prof. Bury's remark that 'imperialism of Pericles was indeed of a lofty kind' stands justified. But the political supremacy of all Hellas, Pericles failed to achieve for Athens although he ensured the intellectual ascendancy of Athens.

Partial success

His imperial policy looked at from its results had begotten hatred and enmity. The cities within the Athenian empire, reduced from the 'status of equal partners to the servile position of tributaries were naturally irreconciled to Athenian domination. Not welded by any spirit of genuine loyalty they were seething in discontent. Further, to powers not within the Athenian empire, Athens's growing empire, power and prestige roused a natural feeling of jealousy in powers like Sparta. Her commercial greatness threatened the prosperity of countries like Corinth. The eventual and cumulative effect of Pericles' imperial policy gave the back push in the shape of a great war with Peloponnesian Confederacy.

*Effects of
Periclean
imperialism*

CHAPTER 8

Peloponnesian War

Thucydides' alarmist theory about the cause of the war

1/Causes of the Peloponnesian War: It was customary for long to accept Thucydides' explanation as to the real cause of the great war between Athens and Sparta. 'The truest explanation' remarks Thucydides 'I consider to be the growing power of the Athenians which alarmed the Lacedaemonians and forced them into war'. But this explanation has not been accepted by writers like Adcock and others of his way of thinking. Prof. Adcock points out that 'neither the history of ten years which preceded nor of ten years which followed justifies the statement'. According to him, Thucydides' remark 'seems to explain more truly why the war began again in 413 B.C. and ended as it did, than why it began at all in 431 B.C.'.

Two grievances

Thucydides has mentioned two grievances which supported his contention, these were the affairs of Corcyra and the affairs of Potidaea.

Affairs of Epidamnus

Epidamnus, a colony planted by Corcyra to the northward on the coast of Illyria became a rich city by exploiting trade. Long years of internal strife in the city had ended in the expulsion of the aristocrats who harried the city both by land and sea being supported by the neighbouring barbarians with whom the democrats of Epidamnus were at war. The democrats appealed to Corcyra, the mother country for intervention. Corcyra refused and in despair the Epidamnians appealed to Corinth. The Corinthians were no democrats, but they seized the opportunity of injuring Corcyra an unfilial colony of theirs, and making Epidamnus a colony and dependency of their own. The Corinthians in full consciousness of profitable benevolence sent out colonists and troops to Epidamnus. The news of their coming to Epidamnus led to

Corcyraean intervention

counter-intervention by Corcyra and a squadron was sent by her to demand expulsion of the new settlers and troops that had arrived from Corinth. On the refusal of Epidamnus to comply, Corcyra besieged the city whereupon Corinth began to fit out a fleet in an expedition against Corcyra. Corcyra sobered by the fear of a Corinthian expedition offered to submit the whole question to certain agreed Peloponnesian states for arbitration, which the Corinthians refused to agree to. Naturally Corcyra, forced into war by Corinth sought to invite help from Athens. In 435 B.C. a fleet of seventy-five triremes, thirty of Corinth herself and the rest drawn from her allies set sail. The Corinthian fleet forced a battle near the promontory of Leucimne, but was signally defeated and retreated with the loss of fifteen ships. Humiliated by defeat the Corinthians began preparing for yet a stronger expedition, which compelled the Corcyraeans to break their splendid isolation, which was their pride, and sue for help to Athens. Envoys were sent to Athens for the purpose but they were closely followed by Corinthian envoys. Thucydides has given us two speeches which presented the rival contentions of the Corcyraean and the Corinthian envoys before the Athenian Assembly. Two points of crucial importance were justice and expediency of a possible Athenian intervention. Since Corcyra was not in alliance with any country, Athens would be quite justified in accepting her into alliance and this would be consistent with the terms of the Thirty Years' Truce. About Corinthian argument of justice, Athens could plead Corinth's war against her some twenty-seven years ago. Whether Athenian intervention would be expedient or not did not clearly emerge from the speeches—it had to be decided by Athens on her own. In fact, Corinth made a diplomatic offer to Athens that common interests of imperial states must be obeyed and Corinth would not stand in the pursuit of Athenian interest in the Aegean should the latter reciprocate on the same basis in regard to Corinthian sphere of influence in western Greece.

*Corinthian
intervention*

*Athenian help
sought by
Corcyra*

*Arguments for
Athenian
acceptance of
Corcyra in
alliance*

Corinthian

*Athens
accepted
Corcyra in
alliance*

Expediency would prompt Athens to intervene for the diplomatic offer of Corinthian envoy was outweighed by the Corcyraean argument that Corinthian control of the Corcyraean fleet, second largest in Greece, would challenge the maritime supremacy of Athens. This was certainly most convincing. Further Corcyra as an Athenian ally would offer the latter the strategic advantage on the route to and from Italy and Sicily. Alliance with Corcyra was struck but it was a defensive one, for offensive action against Corinth would constitute a breach of the Thirty Years' Truce.

*Athens sent
assistance*

Athens sent two squadrons of ten and twenty triremes one following the other, with instructions not to intervene except for preventing a Corinthian victory. In the battle of Sybota the Corinthians were victorious until night and the Athenian commanders at first threatening action eventually acted to give the Corcyraeans cover from pursuit by the Corinthian fleet. With the arrival of the second Athenian squadron the Corinthians avoided engagement and sailed home. This was, according to Thucydides, 'the first grievance from which the Peloponnesian war arose, because Athenians as allies of Corcyra had fought with Corinthians though still at peace with Corinth'.

*Affairs of
Potidaea*

The second grievance arose from the affairs of Potidaea, an old colony of Corinth but now a tributary ally of Athens. Potidaea received her magistrates from the mother-city, i.e. Corinth and they now became agents of the Corinthian hatred of Athens. In 433 B.C., Potidaea was planning a revolt and there was no love lost between Potidaea and Athens, for the latter had more than doubled Potidaea's annual tribute. Athens demanded expulsion of the Corinthian magistrates from Potidaea and demolition of the city wall. The envoys from Potidaea went to Sparta where the ephors were found to be inclined to war and lavish with promises. Eventually, Athens sent 30 ships and 1000 hoplites to enforce her demands on Potidaea whereupon the latter with the support of her Chalci-

*Potidaea
appeals to
Sparta for
help*

dian and Boeotian neighbours openly revolted. The Peloponnesian League was ill organised for swift action but the Corinthians had already moved on receipt of the news of the revolt, with a force of 2000 Peloponnesian volunteers and in the autumn of 432 Athens and Corinth entered into open hostilities in Potidaea. This was, according to Thucydides, the second grievance which preceded the war. Corinthian envoy was on the road to Sparta and one thing was certain that either Sparta must come out to lead the Peloponnesian League against Athens or face Corinth's defection from the League.

*Revolt of
Potidaea*

*Open
hostilities
between
Athens and
and Corinth*

*Corinth's
complaint to
Sparta*

Athens had earlier lost Megara by revolt and recognised her independence in 445 B.C. In the revolt the Megarians had massacred the Athenian garrison there. On attaining independence Megara which was Dorian by blood and instinct joined the Peloponnesian League. Pericles, 'most certainly anticipating' as Henderson points out, 'by many years the coming of the great war, set himself to compel Megara once again to join the Athenian empire'. As use of force would precipitate the war, Pericles fell back upon diplomacy. He declared an economic blockade of Megara and decreed that no Megarian goods could enter any port or city of the Athenian empire. Megarian trade was sought to be ruined by a single blow. 'Napoleon's Continental System injured but failed to break the spirit of England. In like manner Pericles' boycott of Megarian traders provoked defiance, not submission'. Megara appealed to Sparta to intervene by force of arms on her behalf.

*Megarian
Decrees*

The Megarian Decree has no longer been regarded as a cause of war, in fact, as Prof. Adcock and Grundy point out, it was an act of war. 'The decree was not' remarks Prof. Adcock, 'what vulgar tradition came to see in it, a cause of war, it was an operation of war, the first blow at the courage and will of Athens' adversaries'.

*No cause of
war according
to Prof.
Adcock*

In examining the alarmist theory of Thucydides

*Alarmist
theory of
Thucydides
criticised*

with regard to the real cause of the war much can be said. The Thirty Years' Peace was for Athens a sign of exhaustion and for the first fourteen years of the peace the affairs of Athens had been administered without any view to extension of empire or encroachment upon others. The only known incident where Athens had been brought into collision with a member of the Spartan confederacy prior to the Corcyraean dispute was the passing of Megarian decree prohibiting Megarian trade with Athens and any of the Athenian ports within the Athenian empire.

*Spartan
inaction at the
time of
Samian revolt*

*Samos
reduced*

From the Spartan side it may be pointed out that had there been any deep alarm at the growth of the Athenian empire, Sparta would not certainly have refrained from rendering assistance to Samos and Lesbos when these were in revolt against Athens and appealed to Sparta for assistance. In 441, Samos which was an independent ally of Athens and possessed a fleet of her own was driven to open secession. It began with a dispute between Samos and her neighbour Miletus. Athens not desiring her independent ally Samos to be strengthened sided with Miletus and sent a fleet to establish in Samos a pro-Athenian democracy whereupon the Samians requisitioned help from the Persian satrap at Sardis. Hardly had the Athenian established a pro-Athenian democracy at Samos, the Persian mercenaries attacked the Samian democrats and gained control of the city. Pericles renewed a naval attack on Samos and the Samians vainly looking for the Persian help which did not come, and starved the city to surrender (339 B.C.). Samian fleet surrendered to the Athenian squadron, the wall of the city was dismantled and compensation for the siege was paid both in land and money.

*Spartan
inaction
influenced by
Corinth's
pacific
interest*

The question naturally arises, why the Spartans, should they have any jealousy or an alarm at the growing power of Athens refrain from siding with Samos which was an independent ally of Athens and which possessed a fleet of her own. The Samians had applied to

the Spartan confederacy for aid. Lesbos, another independent ally of Athens also opened negotiations with the Spartan confederacy for aid for similar purpose but both these appeals went unheeded chiefly because of the pacific interests then animating the Spartan ally, the Corinthians.

Further, it becomes difficult to justify the alarmist theory in view of the fact that Sparta remained pacific for long fourteen years of the Thirty Years' Peace although there were opportunities provided during this period to strike at Athenian empire and make her weaker before she would be all the more strengthened and consolidated. Jealousy, hatred or alarm will certainly not allow the power against whom these sentiments are sustained to become stronger.

*Spartan
policy of
peace for 14
years—Why?*

Modern scholars are of opinion that it was the question of commercial expansion that kindled the great war for which fuel had been accumulating in the shape of hate and envy during the fifty years following the Persian wars. Thucydides also admits that Athens' most irreconciled enemy Corinth's persuasion whipped up a war psychosis among the otherwise inactive Spartans. War with Athens was a Corinthian necessity.

*Question of
commercial
expansion*

But then what should be our dispassionate conclusion about the alarmist theory of Thucydides? After all, Athenian power was not certainly at any higher pitch in 432 than in 446 B.C. Prof. Adcock gives us an explanation. According to him, Thucydides' remark with regard to the alarm caused by growing power of Athens, among the Lacedaemonians, holds good for the recrudescence of the war in 413 B.C. rather than the beginning of the war in 431 B.C. 'The words were written by Thucydides after the fall of Athens as he looked back to the Archidamian war and saw it darkened by the tragic shadows of the Sicilian Expedition and the Deceleian war after Alcibiades had made Athens more aggressive and Lysander, had made Sparta more determined. If we look at the Archida-

*Thucydides'
view justi-
fiable when
looked at the
entire period
of war—not
Archidamian
war only*

mian war which raged from 431 to 421 B.C., Thucydides' remark appears to be inept, but looked at the war as a whole Thucydides' remark can claim validity.

*What were
the causes
then?*

Now the question naturally arises as to what were the causes of the Peloponnesian war. If we are not ready to accept Thucydides' alarmist theory how are we to explain the proceedings of the Congress at Lacedaemoni, i.e. according to Lacedaemonian practice, it was necessary that the Spartans themselves would first decide whether a decision was to be taken either in favour or against an issue. In case it would be negative, the case would never even be submitted to the vote of the allies in the Peloponnesian Congress. But if it would be in the affirmative then allies would be called upon to give their decision. If the majority of the allies would vote for the Spartan decision then the entire confederacy would stand pledged to the given line of policy.

*Majority
decision in
Spartan
Assembly
needed*

*Corinth for
instant war*

*Archidamus
well reasoned
arguments
against war*

When Corinth addressed the Assembly followed by the speech of the Athenian envoys who happened to be at Sparta at that time, it became sufficiently clear that Corinth demanded instant war. But king Archidamus setting aside both hatred towards Athens and blind partiality to the allies looked at the question from the point of view of Spartan interests and honour. He reminded the Spartans of the wealth, population, naval force, the cavalry, the hoplites, and large foreign dominions of Athens. He also reminded the Spartans that the issue of the war, good or bad would be Sparta's sole responsibility and cautioned the Spartans that it would be risky to give up the Spartan conservative policy. Archidamus' speech was well-reasoned and full of good sense. There were also a few in the Assembly who subscribed to the view. But the majority in favour of war. To defeat the prudential admonitions of Archidamus, Sthenelaidas one of the Ephors put the question for the decision of the Assembly and as it was customary, a voice vote was taken which made it clear that the majority was in* favour of war. Yet Sthenelaidas affected inability to determine which

*Sthenelaidas
for war*

of the two was louder, directed a division. "Such as you think that the Truce has been violated and the Athenians are doing us wrong, go to that side; such as you think the contrary, to the other side". This was done by Sthenelaidas for bringing about a more impressive manifestation of sentiment and a stronger apparent majority since a portion of the minority would probably be afraid to show their real opinions as individuals openly. The die was cast and no speeches in the Peloponnesian Congress that was now summoned, in opposition to the decision of war was likely to be successful. Needless to mention, the majority in Congress voted for war.

*Sthenelaidas'
more manifest
demonstration
of majority
for war*

Reviewing the conduct of the two great Grecian parties at the momentous juncture with reference to the existing treaties and positive grounds for complaint, it may be said in all fairness to Athens that she was in the right. Athens had done nothing which could fairly be regarded as a violation of the Thirty Years' Truce. Further, for such acts as were alleged to have been a violation, she offered to submit them to amicable arbitration as the terms of the Truce prescribed. The Peloponnesian confederates, on the other hand, were manifestly aggressors in the contest and if Sparta usually so home-keeping and backward now came forward in an attitude so determined for war, we feel compelled to ascribe it partly to the natural jealousy that Sparta had against Athens at the extra-ordinary growth of her empire after the Persian wars, and partly to the pressure of her allies, specially of the Corinthians. Spartan jealousy and hatred towards Athens cannot be disputed and Sthenelaidas voiced these sentiments in the Spartan Assembly and in a total absence of these sentiments simply pressure of the confederates, however strong, would not have persuaded Sparta to act.

*Athens was
not in the
wrong*

*Peloponnesian
confederates
manifestly
aggressive*

*Jealousy at
the growth of
Athenian
empire*

Further, Sparta was pressurised by Corinth whose commercial interests were in greatest jeopardy at the hands of Athens, by the threat of a withdrawal from the Peloponnesian League and finding a new leader

*Sparta
pressurised
by Corinth*

should Sparta continue to remain unmoved. Spartan fear of the loss of the Peloponnesian League was an added cause of her determination to fight Athens. Archidamus' reasoned arguments to the contrary proved weak enough in the circumstances.

*Question of
commercial
expansion*

It was a question of commercial expansion that had kindled the great war between the two great Grecian parties, the facts for which had been accumulating in the shape of Spartan jealousy and the Peloponnesian confederates' complaints against Athens.

*Pericles'
determination
to save
Athenian
empire and
prestige*

Should we not now consider Athens as supplying a cause for the war? Diodorus, Plutarch, Beloch and Aristophanes would put a major share of the blame for the war on Pericles' shoulders. These writers would hold Pericles' desire to make Athens mistress of the Hellas and his willingness to satisfy the commercial party of Athens as great factors in the causation of the war. Further, Pericles also felt the war would offer a good opportunity to save his friends from public censure. Pericles was not in the least willing to make any sacrifice of security or prestige of Athens to preserve peace.

*Combination
of various
factors*

It would, therefore, be a reasonable conclusion to say that jealousy of Sparta, commercial rivalry of Corinth, racial prejudices of the Ionians and the Dorians, chivalrous sympathy of the Peloponnesian confederates with the subject allies of Athens, opposition of political ideas of democracy and oligarchy and above all Pericles' policy of mastery over the whole of the Hellas and his determination not to sacrifice prestige or security of Athens or her empire for the sake of peace conspired to make the war inevitable.

*Spartan
ultimatum*

What Sparta now needed was to gain time; she sent embassies to Athens with trivial demands, answered likewise trivially by Athens. Sparta's purpose of gaining time having been served they sent an ultimatum demanding that Athens* should she feel like averting war (i) must abandon alliance with Corcyra,

(ii) raise the siege of Potidaea, (iii) grant self-government to Aegina, and (iv) rescind the Megarian Decrees. That the terms were impossible of acceptance and in fact insulting, Sparta knew it. It was purposely made hard and vigorous to ensure rejection by Athens.

Athens at some point offered to submit to arbitration the question at issue but held fast to the treaty as in honour bound. It was now Sparta who brushed aside the offer contemptuously. "Sparta was eager for war and so the war began". (431 B.C.).

*War begins
(431 B.C.)*

2/Pericles' Responsibility for the War: It will be pertinent to examine in details the responsibility of Pericles for the Peloponnesian war.

It has been argued that on the Athenian side, Pericles was the cause of the outbreak of the great war. Pericles had for long years anticipated coming of the war and made provisions for it both in money and maritime strength.

*Pericles'
anticipation
of war and
preparation
for it*

Further, he had yielded, reluctantly to the pressure of the commercial interests of Piraeus. But this has been regarded by Henderson and others as the most unattractive and unconvincing of modern theories about the outbreak of the war. 'There is no ounce of evidence to prove this contention', and may be rejected.

*Pericles
yielded to
the pressure of
the trading
interests of
Piraeus*

But it is worthwhile to discuss the remarks of Aristophanes concerning this matter. Twice Aristophanes sets out to explain the cause of the great war. Young revellers of Athens carried off a Megarian lady; the Megarians in turn carried away two of Aspasia's (Pericles' wife) attendants. This roused Pericles to fury and hence along came the Megarian Decrees. But Aristophane's comedy *Acharnians* is a comic foolery and convinced or deceived none. In this *Peace* Aristophanes for a second time refers to the cause of the outbreak of the great war. This time Pheidias the sculptor and friend of Pericles is referred to as the ultimate cause of the war. The sculptor was accused of misappropriating gold and ivory that had been supplied

*Aristophanes'
remarks con-
cerning the
cause of war:*

*(1) Affairs of
Megarian
lady—
Aspasia's
fury led
Pericles to*

(2) *Pheidias'*
disgrace—
Pericles' fear
of involve-
ment

Incredible
merry-making
jobs

to him for making the statue of Athena. Pericles' fear lest he should be involved in the disgrace of his friend has been mentioned as the cause of the great war, for Pericles sought to divert the attention of the Athenians by kindling the flames of war. But how are we to reconcile the fact that for ten years of the war this escaped notice? 'Only a stupid old rustic would take it seriously' remarks Henderson. 'The poet (Aristophanes)' observes Henderson 'himself would have been the first to shout with laughter at any stupid fellow who proposed to take him *an pied de la lettre* (i.e. literally)'. All this was but merry-making jibes of a poet jester, incapable of touching the too lofty reputation and honour of Pericles. 'Yet writers both ancient and modern hastened to adopt and amplify this suggestion concerning the origin of the statesman's militarism'.

Prosecution of
Pheidias,
Anaxagoras
and Aspasia

Pericles' loss
of control of
the popular
Assembly of
Athens

The Athenians, despite the Periclean culture, were superstitious and popular conscience was troubled by atheism of philosophers and popular sense of decency outraged by the prominence of a Salon whose centre and life was a woman. Pheidias' prosecution for misappropriation of gold having failed he was prosecuted for atheism, for he had curved his own figure on the shield of the goddess Athena. Pheidias was condemned and thrown into prison where he died soon after. Philosopher Anaxagoras, also a friend of Pericles was the next victim for he declared that the Sun to be a blazing stone and this was regarded as impious scepticism. Anaxagoras had to flee the country to avoid disgrace. Pericles' wife Aspasia's turn came next. She was saved by the personal entreaty of Pericles at the law court where she was about to be tried of immorality and impiety. Further Cimon's son Lacedaemonius was elected to the Board of ten generals in 433 B.C. which gave Pericles a most unwelcome colleague in the person of his own old rival and political opponent's son. As months passed by, Pericles seemed to lose control of the popular Assembly

of Athens. Over his own head hung Democles' sword in the shape of a threat of his prosecution for embezzlement. There was no other means than plunging Athens into a war in order to save his own political position.

Plutarch observes that most writers assert that Pericles' loss of control of the popular Assembly of Athens 'was the reason why he kindled the flame of war; thinking that this would consume the accusations and abate the envy felt against him. For in grave times of peril the city could only entrust herself to him for guidance, so great was his prestige'. The events justified this, for the threat of accusation vanished as by magic. Entire population rallied to their great statesman's support. Extra-ordinary powers were conferred on him and he was made the President of the college of Generals, the other nine members being subordinated to him. Pericles' policy of 'no compromise' was enthusiastically adopted, the outbreak of war saved his reputation.

*Plutarch's
observation*

*War a
necessity of
Pericles'
reputation*

It has also been argued that the war was as unnecessary as it was ill-timed. If the war would be postponed for a few more years Argos would have been free to join Athens. For, no hostile army would dare march to the Isthmus enroute for Attica with a hostile Argos by the side. But when the war began Argos was bound by a Thirty Years' Peace with Sparta. Athens could have postponed the war by a small concession by rescinding the Megarian Decrees, but Pericles, political safety dictated a policy to the contrary.

*War was
unnecessary
and untimely*

Julius Beloch, a German writer, categorically holds Pericles responsible for the war for personal motives. 'I do not see' writes Beloch 'how Pericles' policy is intelligible on any other hypothesis'. Even Thucydides makes a general observation which covers this aspect of the cause of the war. He holds it as an incontrovertible fact that 'a statesman is influenced by selfish motives'.

*Beloch's
opinion*

*In defence of
Pericles*

*Who gained
by the war?*

Not Pericles

*Pericles
exonerated*

But the question arises, despite the plausibility of personal motives, whether Athens could admit the concession required of her whether she had regard to her prestige or security. It was certainly impossible. Further, when Sparta was bent on war, war there would be. One more point to be considered in defence of Pericles is the question as to who would stand to gain by the war? It cannot be said that Pericles gained as a result of the war. 'It profited no man so little, it endangered no statesman more'. The war demanded amazing sacrifices and Pericles demanded and exacted such sacrifices from the people. This roused to fury the agricultural and land-owning classes, and opponents of Pericles' policy were already numerous. The misery of overcrowding of the city, the reaction against Pericles, hatred towards him cost him his office and nearly cost him his life. 'The man who had ruled the half of the Hellenic world with almost monarchical power stood within but a short distance of a condemnation'. Unless we presume that a statesman of Pericles' standing was curiously ignorant of his people's nature when he urged them to war, it will be difficult to hold him guilty of a blind and foolish opportunism in the supposed interests of his political position when he urged his people to stand firm and not to yield to the demands of their enemy.

*Theban
occupation of
Plataea
through a
stratagem*

3/Towards Hostilities: Diplomatic skirmishes having ended, what needed was an act of open hostility to begin the war between Athens and Sparta and the allies on either side. Thebes aimed at making a united Boeotia by occupying Plataea a renegade Boeotian city bound in alliance with Athens. A plot was laid with a party in Plataea which aiming at capturing power of the city, and the gates were thrown open by them at night when an advance party of the Thebans, three hundred strong was admitted into the city. The Plataeans were awakened by the voice of a herald summoning them to resume their old place in the Boeotian confederacy. For the

Thebans were anxious to have a good title to the possession of Plataea and did not agree to massacre the Plataeans as advised by the traitors. When the citizens of Plataea realised how small a Theban force had entered the city, they plucked courage and attacked the Theban hoplites that had entered the city and in the rain and squalor succeeded in striking confusion among the invaders most of whom were killed and finally allowed to surrender and were held as hostages against the attack of the Theban reinforcements.

The Plataeans massacred most of the Theban hoplites and held others as hostages

The Theban main body of hoplites which was delayed by the rain-swollen river Asopus received the news of the disaster and thought of taking the Plataeans outside the city prisoners and use them as hostages for the safety of the Thebans who were held by the Plataeans within the city. But the Plataeans stole a march over the Thebans and sent a herald to denounce the Theban action and threatened to kill the hostages if the Plataeans outside the city were any way harmed or if the Thebans advanced towards the city.

Main body of the Thebans delayed—Plataean herald warned them against advance on pain of the death of the hostages

The news of the entry of the Thebans into the city of Plataea reached the Athenians who at once seized all the Bocotians in Athens rightly regarding an attack on Plataea an Athenian subject ally as a war on themselves and sent word to the Plataeans not to take action against hostages held by them until further instruction from Athens. But the herald reached to find the hostages already done to death. A renewed and more determined attack was naturally expected. Athens at once sent troops to garrison Plataea and arranged for the removal of all non-combatants to Athens. Theban attack on Plataea gave a burial to the Thirty Years Peace; it served as a signal for the mobilisation of the enemies of Athens.

Athens took action

Thirty Years' Peace ended

The whole of the Peloponnese except Sparta's old rival Argos and the Achaeans except of the Canton of

*Spartan
mobilisation*

Pellene obeyed the call of Sparta. In addition to their own marine the Spartans gave orders to the states that had declared for her to send along their ships and to undertake building of new one to reach the ambitious number of 500 triremes. Athens on her part, mustered her own troops, reviewed her existing confederacy and sent envoys to places more immediately round Peloponnese, Cephallenia, Corcyra, Acarnia, Zacynthus hoping that if these could be relied on would be in a position to convey the war all round the Peloponnese.

*Athenian
mobilisation*

*Corinth most
irreconciled
enemy of
Athens*

4/Corinthian Responsibility for the War :

Thucydides has called Corinth as the most irreconciled enemy of Athens and it was Corinth's persuasion that whipped up a war psychosis among the otherwise inactive Spartans.

*Growth of
Athenian
power—a
matter of
concern for
Corinth*

Corinth was the greatest commercial city of the isthmus and her maritime strength was second only to that of Athens. The growth of Athenian empire and her maritime and commercial activities naturally became matters of grave concern for Corinth. True, that Corinth had helped Athens with twenty ships in her war against Aegina. The Athenian possession of Megara and Boeotia and especially the station at Naupactus gave Athens control of the northern shores of the gulf. Further, between 453 and 446 B.C. Achaea became Athenian dependency. All this made it possible for the Athenian fleet to sail in the Corinthian gulf and Saronic Bay with a sense of dominion. It was also the policy of Pericles to convert the Corinthian gulf into an Athenian lake in order to hem in Corinth on both sides. Fear of the loss of maritime trade and strength to Athens naturally made Corinth inimically disposed towards Athens. In the Samian revolt, Corinth did not side with the Samians against Athens. The appeals of the Samians to the Spartan confederacy went unheeded 'chiefly because of the pacific interest

*Fear of the
loss of
maritime
trade made
Corinth
inimical
towards
Athens*

*Avoidance
of war*

then animating the Spartan ally Corinth'. All the same the growth of Athenian commerce and empire threatened Corinthian prosperity. As Corinth was primarily a commercial state, she was naturally inclined to peace. Yet she would not be prepared to lose her commerce to her rival Athens and in the event of a real to threat her commercial prosperity and prospect of a slow decline, she would prefer war to peace.

Against this background the conflict between Corcyra and Corinth, and the Athenian intervention caused the emergence of a situation that compelled Corinth to choose the alternative of war.

*Athenian
intervention
alters
situation*

Corcyra was an unfilial colony of Corinth which due to her geographical position hindered Corinthian commerce with Sicily and South Italy. Corinthians held the monopoly of trade with north-western Greece, but Corcyraean trade now became a challenge to that monopoly.

*Corcyra of
Corinth*

In the affairs of Epidamnus Corinth saw her chance of intervention in favour of Epidamnus. Corcyraean plea for arbitration went unheeded by the Corinthians. But in the naval battle that followed Corcyra won a naval victory (435 B.C.), over Corinth. The latter was all the more incensed by this humiliation and began preparations for a more formidable expedition. This caused the Corcyraeans to approach Athens for help. The Corinthians also sent their envoy at the same time. The reply of the Corinthian envoy to the speech of the Corcyraean envoy was rather weak. Corinthian appeal to certain past services to Athens, already referred to above, was not of much effect, and as Prof. Bury points out 'there was nothing but jealousy between the two cities'.

*Affairs of
Epidamnus*

*Athenian
reception of
Corcyra into
her alliance*

Likewise Corinthian argument that Athens' alliance with Corcyra would constitute a violation of Thirty Years' Peace was untenable. The decision of the Athenian Assembly to accept Corcyra in alliance with Athens threw Corinth off her feet. This was atonce

*Corinthian
charge of
violation of
Thirty years'
Peace*

a danger and a humiliation for Corinth and she construed it to be a violation of the 'Thirty Years' Peace and was out to fight out the issue with Corcyra.

*Athenian
intervention
in the battle
of Sybota*

*Potidaean
affairs:
Siege of
Potidaea*

*Megarian
Decree*

At the battle of Sybota (433 B.C.) the Corcyraeans worsted the Corinthians with the intervention of the Athenian ships at the moment of extreme Corcyrean discomfiture. The Corinthians had to retreat. This was followed by Athenian prohibition of receiving magistrates by Potidaea, originally a colony of Corinth but included in the Athenian alliance. The original practice of receiving annually magistrates from the other city was allowed to continue till now when Athens in order to safeguard her interests prevented this. But Potidaea sided with Corinth and revolted. The Athenians advanced against Potidaea and gained advantage over the Corinthian general who had arrived with some Peloponnesian forces to the east of Corinth. The city was then invested. So far Corinth was in the field against Athens, single-handed. But realising the enormity of the task "Corinth took active steps to incite the Lacedaemonians to declare war against Athens". The Athenian leader Pericles realised that war was coming and passed the *Megarian Decree* (432 B.C.) excluding Megarians from the markets and ports of the Athenian empire. This economic weapon was used against Megara which had assisted Corinth at the battle of Sybota to spell her economic ruin. Megara was an important member of the Peloponnesian League.

*Congress at
Lacedaemon*

Even before the news of the Athenian victory at Potidaea came, the allies of Sparta met in a Congress at Lacedaemon, that is, Sparta and brought formal charges against Athenian violation of the *Thirty Years' Peace*. The part played by Corinth in this First Congress at Lacedaemon and in the Second Congress as well will show the extent to which Corinth must share the responsibility for the outbreak of the war. The last speaker in the First Lacedaemonian Congress was the Corinthian envoy who charged Athens of outrage and

Lacedaemonians of neglect. Athens' reception of Corcyra into alliance was termed as a *fraud*. Corinthian envoys squarely fixed the responsibility for all this on the shoulders of Sparta. Recounting the entire past history of Athenian growth of power, Corinthian envoy drew up an able comparison between the Athenian and the Spartans, touching particularly where Sparta suffered by comparison. All this was to rouse a rather slumbering Sparta to action, which Corinth, left to herself, was incapable to undertake against Athens. Corinthian envoy's speech was a indictment of Sparta, the leader of the Peloponnesian Confederacy; it ended with an appeal for ending the policy of procrastination and immediate sending of assistance to Potidaea. The questions of the Athenian violation of 'Thirty Years' Peace as well as of the sure degeneration of Spartan prestige due to her policy of inaction were referred to. These were indeed real grievances, 'but more powerful was the Corinthian veiled threat which followed, that if Sparta would not fight for her allies, they must look elsewhere for a leader'.

*Corinthian
speech :
Its influence*

*Corinthian
appeal for
Peloponnesian
intervention*

*Corinthian
threat of
withdrawal
from the
Peloponnesian
Confederacy*

It is relevant to point out that two years before, shrewd King Archidamus had advised Corinth to arrive at some peaceful settlement with Corcyra. Further, the Spartans had intimated Corinth soon after the alliance between Athens and Corcyra that it did not constitute any breach of the 'Thirty Years' Peace. If Corinth then would wish to involve the Peloponnesian Confederacy into a war with Athens some more definite grievance against Athens. The affairs of Potidaea supplied this grievance. Corinth was committed to assist Potidaea, and Corinth herself was the most important of the Spartan allies.

*Original
attitude of
Sparta*

*Siege of
Potidaea
offers
additional
ground*

Naturally Corinth lent all her weight for involving the Peloponnesian Confederacy into a war with Athens and the arguments fell on willing ears of the party in Lacedaemon that wished war.

*Corinthian
weight for
involving
Peloponnesian
Confederacy
in a war
against Athens*

The Corinthian envoys also dwelt upon a plan of

*Corinthian
plans of war*

war, in which invasion of Attica was to be an immediate step, obviously Corinth was confident of Peloponnesian success.

*Corinth whips
up war
psychosis:
decisive
contribution
to the cause
of war*

Thus the *violent hatred* of Corinth towards Athens for reasons referred to above whipped up a war psychosis among the Spartans and the 'Angry men at Corinth' who 'had not feared fire' decisively contributed to the most important cause of the war.

In the Second Congress at Lacedaemon, the decision was for war.

*War does not
proceed on
definite rules
—all
calculations
may prove
wrong*

5/Strength of the Rivals: Wars, of all things, proceed least upon definite rules and calculation of strength and weakness although imperative for parties to the war are but preliminary assessments which may or may not eventually conform to the expected results. Parties to any war are sure to have their respective reasons to hope for success when war comes not all on a sudden. Yet results belie expectations.

*Sources of
information as
to strength
and weakness
of Parties
to the
Peloponnesian
war*

On the eve of the Peloponnesian war the strength and weakness of the parties were by their individual calculations, well matched. From the speeches in the Lacedaemonian Congress and the Athenian Assembly, as also from documents and other independent sources, the assessment of the strength and weakness of the parties may be made with somewhat certainty. Grundy and Henderson, Thucydides and others are of much help in this regard. At the beginning of war each side must consider its own and its enemy's resources. Strategy and tactics only come next.

*Resources of
the rivals*

So far as the Peloponnese and Athenians were concerned the assessment of their resources stood as follows:

*On the
Spartan side:
territorial*

The peoples of Greece were divided into two rival camps represented by the two chief antagonists—Sparta and Athens. Except Argos and Achaea, the whole of the Peloponnesus was commanded by Sparta. In the

Isthmus she had both Megara and Corinth on her side. In the north Greece Boeotia, Phocis and Locris, and in west Greece Anactorion, Ambracia and the island of Leucas were on the side of Sparta.

On the Athenian side, besides the maritime empire she had, Athens commanded the Acarnians, Corcyra, Zacynthus as well as Naupactus in western Greece, in northern Greece she had Plataea. These were her only allies outside her confederacy.

*On the
Spartan side:
territorial*

The Athenian citizen army consisted of hoplites, i.e. heavy armed infantry, light-armed infantry and cavalry. Military service having been compulsory in Athens for every citizen between the age of eighteen and sixty. Hence the largest section of the citizen army was comprised of the citizens. Of the 19,000 hoplites, 16,000 were Athenian citizens and only 3,000 resident aliens. Out of 19,000 hoplites 3,000 served as garrison army to guard Athens and Piraeus and their connecting walls and the small forts and roads on the frontiers. The garrison army was composed of those among the hoplites who were either too young or too old for service in the field.

*Athens'
citizen army*

*Hoplites, i.e.
heavy armed
troops*

This figure is controversial. Thucydides gives it as 29,000. Diodorus and Ephorus accepted this figure from Thucydides. But it is improbable and has been criticised by Delbruck and Beloch. However the *Hoplites* were the most striking part of Greek armies.

*Figures
given by
Thucydides*

The light armed troops were numerous and in the campaign of Delium in 424 B.C. more than 10,000 of these were engaged, according to Thucydides. But their military efficiency was not of high order and as Grundy points out, their organisation was loose as they had also to man the Athenian fleet. Among the light armed troops was a special corps of 1,600 archers supplemented by hired mercenaries.

*Light armed
troops*

The cavalry was very weak in number, it totalled only 1,200 including the horse archers. The cavalry

Cavalry won fame on the comic stage as the Knights of Aristophanes but in the field it won no glory, no great war. Athens' Thessalian allies could have remedied the deficiency in cavalry but that part of the Thessalian population which supplied the cavalry was most lukewarm in Athens' cause and except at a skirmish at Phrygia, the Thessalian cavalry gave very little help to Athens.

Contingents from the subject allies Athens could, however, requisition contingents from the cities of her empire. This was done when the great Athenian Armada set sails in 415 B.C. Except on great efforts, the subject allies seldom sent contingent of troops. Only for minor operations near home they sent small contingents on request of Athens.

Help from independent allies Independent allies and mercenaries might as well be enlisted on occasions. But these would not take away from the 19,000 hoplites the need for bearing the main brunt of the war.

Peloponnesian forces stronger than entire Athenian levy In comparison to the land forces of Athens, those of the Peloponnesian League were much stronger. These, were more numerous than the full Athenian levy. Of the Peloponnesian army the Spartan troops was proportionately few yet they supplied the stiffening of the entire army to render it invincible.

Total strength of the land forces of the Peloponnesian League Boeotia, the northern ally of Sparta had a strong hoplite force which had defeated the Athenians in the battle of Coronea. In the battle of Delium (424 B.C.) the Boeotian and the Athenian hoplites were equal in numbers but the former were decidedly more doughty than the latter. The cavalry of the northern allies —Boeotia, Phocis and Locris were twice as strong in proportion to the Athenian cavalry. The light armed troops were as numerous as those of the Athenians, and definitely better organised than the latter. The combined forces of the Peloponnesian allies of both north and south were so numerous and strong that no Athenian force was strong enough to bear the brunt of attack in the open field. According to a contemporary Athenian annalist, the total military strength of the

Peloponnesian army was 100,000 men. The army that had wasted Attica at the beginning of the war alone numbered 60,000.

The difference between the land army of the two sides was not one simply of numbers, it was also of quality. 'The hoplites force of Athens seems to be in the sorriest condition' was the observation of an Athenian writer. Even on Pericles' own admission 'in a single pitched battle the Peloponnesians and their allies were a match for all Greece'. Thus in effectiveness in battles the Peloponnesian League was far superior to Athens and her allies.

Difference of both number and quality

The position was exactly reversed in the naval strength of the two sides. Both in number and efficiency the Athenian navy was as superior to their enemy as the latter in land forces. Athens had a fleet of 300 triremes of her own and some more were furnished by some of her allies who still preferred to contribute ships. Chios had a navy of 60 triremes and Corcyra of 120, of which she sent 50 to help Athens.

Athenian navy superior in number and efficiency

The Peloponnesian fleet was as weak as it was inefficient. In number Corinth and her friendly colonies could collect 130 triremes, Megara 40 and Elis only 10. For once before the final stage of the war the Peloponnesian fleet of 100 triremes was found afloat in home waters (413 B.C.). In 427 Alcibides took a squadron of 40 triremes right across the Aegean which ran back home in panick at the sight of two Athenian triremes.

Weak Peloponnesian fleet

To remove the naval inferiority the Spartan government at the beginning of the hostilities indulged in wild hopes of raising their fleet to a grand total of 500 and sent words to their friends in Italy and Sicily to send them the available ships and to build new ones to make up the number. But it was not until the Sicilian disaster had destroyed two-thirds of the Athenian navy, that a total number of thirty ships were contributed, some twenty by Syracuse and ten

Spartan vain attempt at raising the number of ships to 500

by Thurii and the total number of the Peloponnesian ships equalled the remnant of the Athenian fleet. And yet for many years to come, the Athenian fleet wrested victory from the Peloponnesians.

*Difference in
number and
skill of the
rival naval
forces—
Athens over-
whelmingly
superior*

As in the case of the land forces the difference between the rivals was one not only of number but of efficiency as well, such was the difference in the number of ships and the naval skill. Fifty years unbroken practice gave the Athenian admiralty an overwhelming superiority which the Peloponnesians would never acquire, although they light-heartedly thought that such skill could be acquired or improvised speedily.

*Question of
naval skill*

The Corinthian assertion that 'as soon as we have brought our naval skill up to the level of theirs, our courage will surely give us the victory. For courage is a natural gift which they cannot learn. But skill is a thing acquired to be won by practice', is squarely met by Pericles in his speech in the Athenian Assembly. 'How can they acquire skill, no sailors they—mere tillers of the soil? Maritime skill is like skill of other kinds, not a thing to be cultivated casually at any chance time, by the way'. 'Familiarity with the sea they (Peloponnesians) will not find an easy acquisition'.

*Question of
finances*

After men, money is the most important of the sinews of war. King Archidamus remarked in his speech before the Spartans that 'war is a matter of money'. In ancient times when credit as we understand in the modern financial sense was not known. Each state had to find its money from within. Pericles in his speech had dwelt upon the hindrance that the Peloponnesians would experience for want of money.

*Financial
strength of
Athens*

Financially Athens was much stronger compared to Sparta. Pericles was a consummate financier and for many years before the outbreak of the war he had been building up a war fund in the State treasury. He believed that 'wars must be paid for out of

capital, not out of forced contributions'. When the war was about to begin Athens had 9,700 talent reserve fund in the treasury, reduced to 6,000 talent by expenses of public building and siege of Potidaea. Athens' income was upward of 1,000 talents a year bulk of which (600 talents) came from the tributes paid by her subject allies and the rest came from silver mines, customs, law-courts, indirect taxes and taxes on the alien residents. Uncoined gold reserve in Athens at the time was worth 540 talents. Pericles' financial statement apparently was most convincing. But the flaw in the argument lay in the fact that he was depending entirely on the built-up reserve which was likely to be consumed by meeting the surplus expenditure over income during the war years. And there was no guarantee of any speedy end of war. Within a few years new sources of income—a direct tax had to be levied to supplement the vanishing capital reserve fund.

*Flaw in
Pericles'
arguments*

Further, the major portion of the war expenditure was being paid for by the subject allies and as the war lingered on discontent and ill-feeling grew stronger year by year. There was constant risk of secession. In fact Pericles' successors were brought face to face with serious financial as well as military difficulties.

*Discontent
and ill-feeling
in the subject
allies*

Sparta had, on the other hand no accumulated reserves. 'We have no money in the treasury, and we are never willing to contribute out of our private means' said Archidamus to the Spartans. The Spartans were never called to colours in the sowing and the harvesting times of the year. This stood in the way of continuous military operation. The Peloponnesian troops received no pay, they went to battle when they were called out, except sowing and harvesting periods of the year, and wherever possible they lived on the spoils of the enemy country. Such was the self-sustaining financial system of the Peloponnesians. As Archidamus remarked 'war needs no fixed charges' and on the outbreak of the war there was no special war tax imposed. This simple system of finances

*Weaker
financial
system of
Peloponnesian*

*It worked
well*

worked quite smoothly for the war on land. Schemes for contributions to war chest or for borrowing on large scale from Delphi did not succeed. All the same it was only in the last years of the war when a large fleet had to be maintained that Sparta found herself in a sorry financial state.

*Balance-sheet
of strength
and weakness*

*Sparta
superior on
land, Athens
on sea*

*Both
financially
capable of
paying their
way*

*Athenian
allies
dependent by
discontented—
Spartan allies
independent
but loyal*

*Athens capable
of commanding
instant
obedience—
Sparta allies
delaying*

*Athens had
quick-witted
energy—
Sparta dogged
courage*

*Athens had
qualifications
of a ruling
state—but no
attraction or
persistence*

*Sparta
determined on
destruction of
the enemy—
Athens only
of survival*

Thus when the balance-sheet of the strength and weakness of the rivals at the commencement of the war are considered, we find that (i) Sparta was immeasurably superior to Athens on land and latter immeasurably superior to the former on the sea. (ii) Financially, both sides were for the initial years able to pay their way but in the event of a long drawn war Athens was likely to be more handicapped, particularly with the prospect of secession by the subject allies who paid the bulk of the money. (iii) Athens' subject allies were apparently loyal but really discontented and ill-disposed towards Athens, but Spartan allies being independent and more equal with herself, could argue, grumble or even carry a protest through against her, were yet more reliable. (iv) While Athens, could command her allies' instant and unquestioning obedience because they were subject allies, Sparta had to give her allies opportunity of expression of their will because they were independent and equal in status, hence there was almost invariably delay in taking decisions. (v) While again the Athenian possessed 'quick-witted energy', the Spartans could set it off by their 'dogged courage'. (vi) Athens possessed all the qualities needed of a ruling state except of course the power of attraction and strength of persistence in the face of depression and discouragement. (vii) Athens was reliant on her cause but more concerned with survival, as Pericles impressed upon his people, but Sparta was confident of speedy victory and destruction of the rival empire.

The speech of the Corinthian envoy in the First Lacedaemonian Congress draws a contrast between

Athens and Sparta in respect their peoples' nature. "The Athenians were addicted to innovation and their designs are characterised by swiftness alike in conception and execution; you (Spartans) have a genius for keeping what you have got, accompanied by a total want of invention and when forced to act you never go far enough. Again, they adventurous beyond their power, and daring beyond their judgment and in danger they are sanguine, your wont is to attempt less than is justified by your power. 'Further there is promptitude on their side against procrastination on yours, . . . they are swift to follow up a success and slow to recoil from a reverse'.

Contrast in natural abilities of the Athenians and the Spartans

In all appearances Athens was superior to Sparta. Pericles had naturally reasons to be optimistic. But ways in which war proceeds are unpredictable. Athens and Sparta—both sides entered the war sufficiency convinced of success on each side.

Athens superior to Sparta

6/Periclean Strategy: G. F. R. Henderson in his *Science of War* has defined strategy as 'the art of bringing the enemy to battle'. But this is rather an over simplification of the meaning of the term. Strategy is to be taken to mean to discover the enemy from a point of vantage and to destroy him in battle with the utmost economy of forces. Strategy, as B. W. Henderson mentions are of two types: *strategy of annihilation* and *strategy of exhaustion*.

Strategy: Two types

The strategy of annihilation as is obvious from the name itself, aims at inflicting the greatest damage to the enemy within the shortest possible time and destroy the live force of the enemy side.

Strategy of annihilation

Strategy of exhaustion means avoiding fighting with the enemy. It is meant to deprive the enemy of every possible opportunity of fighting in any large battle but to allow him to exhaust his resources and patience till he is induced to make peace.

Strategy of exhaustion

Athenian strategy in the Peloponnesian war was the

*Periclean
strategy—
three aspects*

strategy of Pericles, for first two and half years of the war. It was a *strategy of exhaustion*. It may be considered under three heads.

Defensive

*Avoidance of
pitched battles*

*Defence by
relying on the
linked fortress
of Athens and
Piraeus*

*To maintain
Status Quo*

First, Athens must remain strictly defensive and regard herself as an island. As a natural sequence of this principle, all the country dwellers were to come into the city. 'Let us give up the lands and houses, but keep a watch on the city and the seas' said Pericles. Pericles played for safety. To remain strictly on the defensive at the same time to avoid pitched battles with the Peloponnesians were what Pericles aimed at, for the Athenians were no match for the Peloponnesian army. This decision was taken after a reflection on the history of the past thirty years. Pericles had realised that he must refuse a decisive battle and rely on the great linked fortresses of Athens and Piraeus for the defence or on the action of the Athenian navy and the land army of the Athenian forces for attack. The Athenians under no provocation were to do no more than to defend the walls. Naturally, the cornfields and the olive groves were to be abandoned to the mercy of the invaders. By disappointing the Peloponnesians of their confident hope of a speedy victory Pericles wanted to sicken them and make them eager for suggesting peace. It goes without saying such a peace would mean maintenance of the *status quo ante bellum*. Pericles' object was strictly limited, for he hoped to save Athens as an Imperial city. Loss of wealth would be made up anew in the following years if Athens could retain her empire and remain the queen of the seas. He, therefore, would not mind to abandon the fields and the groves to the enemy's ravage.

*Navy to be
maintained in
good form*

Secondly, the fleet must be maintained at full strength, for the real strength of the Athenians lay in their command over the sea. It was by the means of their navy alone that they could think of keeping control over their empire and collect the revenues which were most needed in times of war. The necessity

of maintaining uninterrupted supply of food and other essentials also pointed to such a course.

Thirdly, the Athenian fleet was also to go coasting round the Peloponnese from time to time and small landing parties might do whatever damage they could to the sparsely distributed coastal hamlets of the enemy. Attempts at occupying bases or confiscating corn ships coming to Peloponnesian harbour might as well be made. In these ways Athens might retaliate the Peloponnesian invasions and ravage of Attica and inflict on the enemy more damages than what they would be in a position to do upon Attica. For after all, the Peloponnesians would not be in a position to supply their own deficiency except by battle, but Athens could easily do that for she possessed plenty of other lands as well as the continent. This policy of reprisals was also to make the war more in the nature of a war of attrition. Further, injury to enemy's trade particularly that of Corinth and Megara was also to be restorted to in order that financial damages might be inflicted on the enemy.

Occasional coasting trips

Attempts at occupying bases and confiscating enemy ships

Policy of reprisals

Thus it is clearly seen that Periclean strategy had both a negative and a positive sides, negatively it was defensive, positively it was offensive. By this strategy, Pericles hoped, he would be able to exhaust the patience and resources of the enemy.

sides of the strategy

Periclean strategy has been regarded by Grote as one of the positive signs of Pericles' genius. Even Thucydides it may be said, leaves a similar impression. Prof. Adcock remarks that 'Geography and manpower forced upon him (Pericles) the strategy of Frederick; it is idle for critics to demand from him the strategy of a Napoleon'. But it cannot be gainsaid that the policy was essentially a defensive one and had serious limitations. It, obviously depended for its success on three points which Pericles seemed to have taken for granted.

Grote's criticism

First, that Athens could be regarded as an island.

Pericles' mistake in taking three things for granted:
 (i) *Athens could be regarded as an island*

(ii) *Material damages would not affect people's morale*

People's exasperation

Loss of morale

(iii) *Numerical strength in the city—
 —result
 plague*

Athenians rendered unfit

But by no means Athens could be treated like that. Her continental link could bring the enemy inside her, at the same time she must have to depend on the empire for her existence. *Secondly*, it presupposed that material damages of Attica annually inflicted by the enemy would not affect the morale of the people. But this was relying too much on the policy of self-denial of the Athenians. In fact, what was destroyed by the Peloponnesians was not the annual crops but also the olive groves which Sophocles once claimed as indestructible and in which lay the wealth of the Athenians. Loss of large capital in the annual destruction of the olive groves naturally exasperated the Athenians to remain mere onlookers of the destruction of their annual crops and the burning down of their precious olive groves. No wonder, demoralisation set in among the Athenians. The plan of avoiding battle ruined the spirit of the Athenian troops as also the temper of the Athenian people. Loss of one or two battles perhaps would not have resulted in this kind of depression. Further, Pericles' point that the Athenians were no match for the Peloponnesian army, that is, they were unfit to meet the enemy had actually made them unfit. At Sphacteria, at Delium and against the Boeotians they went into action in slavish fear. *Thirdly*, the numerical strength of the Athenians was also taken for granted. But factually, 'the overcrowding of the city resulted in the outbreak of pestilence'. In withdrawing all Athenians of the country into the city made it so overcrowded that sanitation failed, proper housing became deficient and the virulent infection of bubonic plague was the result.

We may also add that Periclean strategy was the strategy of the weaker side. As Henderson points out, it will be criminal lunacy for the stronger side to follow this strategy. The policy of exhaustion had ruined the Athenian landowners and peasants which constituted half of the state. 'These losses were quite disproportionate to the petty annoyances inflicted on the foe by the military promenades round the Peloponnese'.

The commandoes round the Peloponnese only scratched the skin of the enemy. No material damage was inflicted by these methods of counter attacks or reprisals as we may call them. Here also Periclean strategy did not prove of much effect.

The basic presumption that Athenian finances were enough to pay the way of the war, which Pericles impressed upon the Athenians, was a miscalculation, for we find in 428 B.C. a tax had to be levied to meet the expenses of war.

*Wrong
assumption
regarding
finances*

Again the idea of turning the war into a war of attrition was unsound in as much as there was no guarantee as to which of the two parties would be exhausted first. What was the guarantee that Athens would not be the first to be exhausted? This had actually happened in 430 B.C. when Athens asked for peace but the Spartans were not tired as yet. As for damages, it was Athens that had suffered most.

*Unsound
policy of
attrition*

The positive, that is the offensive side of Periclean policy was likewise, not without its limitations. The assumption of Pericles that the command upon sea would enable Athens to retain the loyalty of the allies also did not prove to be true. Chalcidice lay open to the attack of the allies. In Asia Minor the Persians were stealing slowly to the coast waiting for an opportunity. Although the suppression of the revolts of the allies formed a part of the positive side of Periclean strategy yet it must be noted that such revolts were definitely ruinous in times of a war with a third power. Athenian control of the seas and her maintenance of the navy in the full swing could not prevent the revolt of Potidaea and Mytilene, although Athenian attitude of dealing with the revolted allies could be understood from the way in which they were suppressed. Athenians ruthlessness in the suppression of the revolts was breeding a hateful awe to the Athenian suzerainty.

*Limitations of
the offensive
side*

‘Cowardice and poverty, demoralisation and despondency, these were the results of Pericles’ *strategy of exhaustion.*’

*What Pericles
could have
done
profitably*

Athens could have rendered better⁹ protection to herself by closing the Isthmus of Corinth by taking possession of Megara. Although Megara was repeatedly ravaged, yet no definite attempt was made to conquer it till 424 B.C. Again, the idea of garrisoning Attica was not at all considered. Lastly, Pericles had under-estimated the aggressive potentiality of the Athenian naval power. His anxiety to be on the defensive gave an idea of inferiority among the Athenians but an open fight would have boosted up their militant spirit. Even on land it is not that numerically stronger forces have always won the battle. Marathon is an instance to the contrary. Pericles should have faced the enemy with no worse consequence. 'To a sounder defence by land there might well have been added a more spirited defence by sea'.

*Three reasons
of Pericles'
failure*

Three reasons have been pointed out as explanation of Pericles' failure: *First*, fascination of insularity—the fatal phrase that Athens was to be regarded as an island. *Secondly*, the dread of casualty list. Pericles sought to avoid, cost of lives in open war. *Thirdly*, Pericles' limitation in as a general. He was an admiral rather than a general.

CHAPTER 9

Archidamian War (431-421 B.C.)

1/From the First Invasion of Attica till the death of Pericles: The Theban attack on Plataea was a gross violation of the 'Thirty Years' Peace and led to the outbreak of the war. The first ten years of the war (431-421 B.C.) go by the name of Archidamian War. As the hostilities began in the wake of the Theban attack on Plataea, the imposing array of the Peloponnesian hoplites mustered in the Isthmus. King Archidamus, 'who had not ceased to be a statesman on becoming a general' sought to give the Athenians a last chance to avoid war. Envoy was sent to Athens to demand concessions which would prevent invasion, but Pericles refused to enter into any negotiation under threat of invasion. Archidamus with his hoplites reinforced by contingents from Boeotia laid siege of the fort Oenoe which guarded the link road between Athens and her ally Plataea. But his army pressed him hard for offering them the chance of a swift invasion of Attic country-side. By the end of May the siege of Oenoe was abandoned and the Peloponnesian army moved into the country of Eleusis and the Thracian plain which then had ripe standing crop. The Peloponnesian army burnt it. There was terrible excitement among the Athenians when they saw the enemies ravaging the standing crops and olive groves which roused furious opposition to Pericles who would not allow the troops to go against them except a few flying squads of the cavalry in the nearest proximity to the city. The Peloponnesian invaders comprising the major portion of the Peloponnesian army, was too numerous to live on the country for long and soon moved northwards between Parnes and Pentelicus, to Decilea and proceeded through the territory of Oropus to Boeotia. The invasion had lasted for a month and despite losses and ravages inflicted by the Peloponnesian army on the country-

*First
invasion of
Attica*

*Burning of
the standing
crops in the
Attic country-
side*

side of Attica, will or power of Athens was least undermined.

*Naval
offensive
by Athens*

*Athenian
gains*

*Aegina settled
with
Athenians*

*Funeral of
those who had
fallen*

The Athenians in the mean time had sent out one hundred triremes manned by one thousand hoplites and four hundred archers, supplemented by Corcyraean triremes numbering fifty, to pay the Peloponnesians in their own coin. The Athenian fleet suffered a check at Methone in Laconia at the hands of the daring and resourceful Spartan Brorsidas by name. But the fleet was more successful in the north, island of Cephal-
 lema was won over and some towns on the Acarnanian coast were taken, town of Thronion was captured and the barren island of Atalante was made a fortified post to check the privateers from the Malian gulf. A squadron was stationed at Euboea to guard against attacks by the Locrians. Aegina, a former rival of Athens, now a subject had a Dorian population which started intrigues with Sparta. This came to light and Athens ejected the Dorian people from Aegina and replaced them by Athenian settlers. Megara was one other state which was invaded by Pericles himself with a combined land and naval force which carried on depredations there. All this time blockade of Potidaea by Athens and its fall became a question of time which again seemed to be very near when a Corinthian name Aristeus kept alive the anti-Athenian sentiment.

When Archidamus left Attica, there was a formal eulogy according to custom, on the citizens who had fallen was expressed by Pericles. Their bones were laid in ten cedar boxes and one empty bed covered with a pall symbolised the coffin of those whose dead bodies were missing. These were all buried outside the city and Pericles pronounced the funeral panygeric.

2/Funeral Oration by Pericles: The funeral speech of Pericles, by common consent, is one of the masterpieces in the whole of ancient oratory. The oration has not been preserved for us in the original form but as Prof. Bury remarks, 'the spirit and the general

argument of it have been reproduced in the oration which Thucydides, who must have been one of the audience, has put in his mouth'. Pericles having been the first citizen of the city of Athens it was his privilege and duty, as was customary to be the 'spokesman of the city'. 'And Thucydides is the spokesman of Pericles'. No historian other than Thucydides has perhaps drawn a picture with more consummate art as 'a justification of her (Athens) before the Greeks who, when the words were written, had ended by destroying her political greatness', as Prof. Adcock observes.

Pericles prefaces his speech by pointing out the difficulties in honouring those who had fallen in battle by a speech delivered by the first citizen of the state, as had been the standing custom and law. After all, the best method of rewarding those who had proved their worth in deeds was to do something in deed, such as was being done in burying the dead at the public cost. But if the honour of the dead was to depend on a funeral speech it might not be doing justice to the dead if the speech was not of sufficiently high standard. Further it might either make an overestimate or underestimate of the virtues of the dead. But despite these personal feelings, Pericles only obeyed the customs and the law as he was speaking to the public on the occasion of the funeral.

Pericles disagrees with the custom—but eventually followed it as it was law

But he took care to turn the occasion to commend the dead and to hearten up and admonishing the living. 'One of the remarkable features in this discourse is its business-like, impersonal character'.

Remarkably business-like and impersonal

'After a few words on the magnitude of the empire and on the glorious efforts as well as endurance whereby their forefathers and they had acquired it—Pericles proceeds to sketch the plan of life, the constitution and the manners, under which such achievements were brought about'.

Deals with the vastness of the empire

About the Athenian constitution he remarks that "Our constitution does not copy the laws of the

Eulogy of the constitution

*Equality
before law*

*opportunity
and individual
liberty*

*Individual
liberty*

*Reciprocal
indulgence in
social life,
with no envy*

*Respect and
fear of law
best safeguard*

*Refreshment
of the mind*

neighbouring states; we are rather a pattern to others than imitators ourselves". The Athenians lived under a constitution which left nothing to envy in the systems of government of the neighbouring states. It was a democracy since its aim was to favour the many and not the few as it happened under an aristocracy or oligarchy. The Athenian constitution unlike the constitutions of the neighbouring states, guaranteed equality of everybody in the eye of law, equal opportunity to all for personal advancement, individual liberty, both in the public and private life. Justice was done between man and man in their private disputes. Station in life, party consideration, poverty nothing was a bar to one's getting fullest opportunity to serve the state. The only consideration was real worth and the reputation in one's own department. 'The freedom we enjoy in our government extends also to our ordinary life.' The private social life of the Athenians was conducted with reciprocal indulgence with no envy at other's lot or pursuits, with no sour and injurious looks on others' doings. The Athenians were a self-restrained people. They avoided of their own from doing any wrong in public matters by the fear and reverence of their magistrates and of their laws. All the ease and freedom enjoyed by the Athenians did not make them a lot of lawless, indisciplined people, because fear and reverence for laws, written or unwritten was their best safeguard and these could not be broken without the taint of disgrace.

If the Athenian constitution provided for the external aspect of the individual life, the Athenians had provided themselves with 'numerous recreations from toil partly by our customary solemnities of sacrifice and festival throughout the year, partly by the elegance of our private establishments, the daily charm of which banishes the sense of discomfort'. But the Athenians were not compelled to limit the enjoyment of luxuries to what was produced within the country, for, the magnitude of the Athenian empire drew into

its harbours foreign luxuries which were as familiar to them as their own.

With regard to the military policy Pericles pointed out how the Athenians differed from their antagonists on several material points. *First*, the Athenians had thrown open their city as a common resort without excluding even the enemy either from any opportunity of learning or observing what he might think profitable to him. This was because the Athenians trusted the native spirit, bravery and efficiency of their own, more than they trusted in policy, manoeuvres, etc. *Secondly*, where their opponents, i.e. the Lacedaemonians were bound from their cradles by a painful discipline and subjected to an irksome exercise for the attainment of courage, the Athenians were, despite their easy habits of life, no less prepared to encounter any legitimate danger. To drive this point home into the minds of his hearers, Pericles referred to the fact that the Lacedaemonian did never invade Athens alone, in fact, they dared not. They would bring with them all their confederates. *Thirdly*, no enemy of Athens had ever contented with the entire Athenian force because Athens had to deploy her forces for hundred different services and victory on the fraction or detachment of the Athenian forces would be magnified by the enemy as victory over the entire nation and defeat as defeat at the hands of the entire Athenian nation. But Athenian courage being inherent and natural, and not acquired by repetition, and the Athenians being free from the hardships of training in anticipation of such hardships coming some time, they were never wanting in daring, courage and sacrifice in the hour of trial.

Material difference between the Athenians and the Lacedaemonians

Natural bravery, and efficiency of the Athenians

Easy habits of life get prepared to face legitimate danger

Entire Athenian forces never deployed

Never wanting in daring and courage

But these were not the only points in which Athens was worthy of admiration, Pericles continued. 'For we combine elegance of taste with simplicity of life, and we pursue knowledge without being enervated. We employ wealth not for talking and ostentation but as a real help.' The Athenian magistrates who discharged public trusts fulfil their domestic duties also,

Elegance of the Athenian life

*Public
consciousness*

*Determination
after
deliberation*

*Combined
action with
thought*

*Athens
school of
Hellas*

*Versatility
of the
Athenians*

*No need of a
Homer or any
panegyrist—
imperishable
monument left*

*Pericles'
exhortation
to the living
and eulogy of
the dead.*

the private citizens while engaged in professional business had competent knowledge on public affairs. In Athens alone the man who kept aloof from public affairs was not regarded as harmless but as useless. The Athenians hear and pronounce on public matters when discussed by their leaders. They combined in most remarkable manner the extreme boldness in execution with full deliberation beforehand. 'We complain only if we are not told what is to be done before it becomes our duty to do it.' The Athenians were, as Pericles made out a extremely politically conscious people who took active part in public affairs besides their normal avocation of life. They deliberated, argued, and got convinced before they acted, they knew most precisely both the terrors of war and the sweetness of peace and as such they were not courageous from ignorance.

Pericles called Athens, the 'School of Hellas' and said 'I doubt if the world can produce a man' who 'is equal to so many emergencies and graced by so happy a versatility as the Athenian'. According to him Athens was the only country among her contemporaries which was greater than her reputation. Pericles even claimed the admiration of the contemporaries and the posterity for Athens and the Athenian people, for mighty proofs had been left for such claims. Athens would not need a Homer or any other panegyrist who might pour out unreal panegyry. Athens had after all, by her exploits left imperishable monuments. 'We have compelled all land and sea to become accessible to our courage, and have planted everywhere imperishable monuments of our kindness as well as of our hostility'—observed Pericles.

Such was the city and the citizens, said Pericles, on behalf of which died those whose funeral speech he was delivering and it was on behalf of the same city all 'who had been left behind must toil. 'You, their survivors, must determine to have as unaltering resolution in the field, though you may pray that it may

have a happier issue'. Pericles also pointed out that the reason for his speaking at length was to draw from it the lesson that the war between Athens and her enemies was not for equal motives and to demonstrate by proofs the truth of his encomium pronounced upon the city and those who died as became the Athenians. He exhorted his hearers to realise the power of Athens and feed their eyes upon her from day to day 'till love of her fills your heart'. Pericles concluded his oration by comforting the parents of the dead.

It is worthwhile to examine the speech of Pericles for its dispassionate evaluation. It must be remembered that patriotism cannot and does not absorb the whole democratic activities and laws and sanctions are necessary to protect the public and individuals from wrong. Subject to such general assumptions it must be said that Athens could be legitimately proud to exhibit a rich and varied fund of human impulse—an unrestrained play of fancy and diversity of private pursuits coupled with cheerful indulgence between one individual and the other. Here we find that Athens was an exception to the general trend of the ancient societies to sacrifice the individual interests to the state, that is the individual existed for the state. Of Sparta this was true. But Athens presented a reverse picture.

Laws and sanctions needed but

Athenians possessed a rich and varied fund of human impulse

Again, Athens was not only hospitable to 'all strangers but also offered many sided activity, physical and mental to them. But Sparta practised jealous expulsion of all outsiders.

Athenian hospitality

Impulses that agitated Athenian mind were, the relish for all pleasures of art and elegance, the aptitude for intellectual expansion coupled with energetic promptitude and endurance, cheerful obedience to hardest patriotic duty, combination of reason and courage, deliberation before action and lastly a competence of judgment in public discussion and private action common to the rich and the poor.

Impulses of Athenian mind

*Ideal
adumbrated
by Pericles
far too unreal
—remarkable
even in
philosopher's
imagination*

Even if we concede most of the claims of Pericles, it must be said without any hesitation that the speech sought to draw a highly exaggerated and one-sided picture of the Athenian life. So comprehensive an ideal, as set forth in the oration of Pericles, of many-sided social development, bringing out the capacities for action and endurance as well as those for enjoyment, would be sufficiently remarkable even if these existed in philosopher's imagination.

*Art, letters
and
philosophy
worked up to
the pitch
afterwards:
energy abated*

With regard to Pericles' claims about art, letters and philosophy, it must be said that these were as yet backward and the active energy and democratic stimulus of the Athenian people 'had not been worked up to the pitch which they afterwards reached'. In fact, in the subsequent period, although the intellectual manifestations of Athens showed a positive upward trend, the enterprise and energetic spirit of her citizens materially abated. The disasters of the Peloponnesian war explain more completely the declining tendency which had already set in. All this lends a peculiar pathos to the discourse of Pericles.

*Exaggerated
picture of
Athenian life*

Despite the fact that the funeral oration of Pericles was a rare 'contribution to history of civilisation' it gave an exaggerated picture of the Athenian life. On a dispassionate survey it has to be conceded that there was much truth in the claims made yet it was a one-sided representation of the facts. Likewise it was exaggeration to say that the enemies of Athens did never encounter the entire forces of Athens. This kind of defence may be put up by every defeated nation. After all, the whole strength of combatants can never be concentrated by any country in any battle. Again, to claim, as did Pericles, that Athens alone helped her friends was extremely naive, it was self-eulogy.

*Absurd
argument*

*Claim about
discipline
unreal*

To say that the Athenians were as brave as the Spartans without the labours of discipline endured by the latter was also unreal. For 'even the most gifted

nation cannot dispense with strict discipline in times of war with impunity' and this certainly can be acquired through arduous training.

As Prof. Adcock remarks, 'For the fault of Athens we have only to look elsewhere in the Thucydidean history. The Athenian empire was the negation of the Greek ideas of rights. If Athens was the saviour of Greece against Persia, she did not hesitate to substitute the Persian imperialism by Athenian imperialism. The Greeks of the Aegean were without their liberty all the same. There was certainly much truth in the accusation by the Corinthian envoy in the first congress at Lacedaemon, that Athens was the destroyer of the Hellenic liberty and culture.'

*Athens
substituted
Persian yoke
by her own*

Pericles did much of the Athenian liberty both in the public and private life, a liberty that the Athenians prized most. But it was not a little strange this was denied to the numerous people within the Athenian empire.

*Liberty denied
to Greeks
within the
Athenian
empire*

Again the Athenian constitution of which Pericles was so much eloquent was not a democracy but it was a veiled autocracy. It could be run only by a person of Pericles' greatness. This became manifest on the death of Pericles himself. This apart, Athens had not admitted the women to the franchise, nor were the slaves given liberty.

*Athenian
democracy was
a veiled
autocracy*

If Athens was the school of Greece, she was a hard school and taught much that was evil. It is not easy to forget the cost to Greece of all this greatness, or the justice of the nemesis that struck Athens down. But it remains true that nothing greater than Periclean Athens ever yet been achieved by the mind and will of man.

*Athens a
hard school*

*Yet
achievement
superb*

3/Second Year of the War: It was in the winter of 431 B.C. that the burial of the dead in the first Peloponnesian invasion, took place. Early in summer

*Second
invasion of
Attica
(430 B.C.)*

of the following year the Lacedaemonians and their confederates invaded Attica for a second time and laid waste the country-side. Within a few days of the invasion of Attica bubonic plague first began to show itself among the Athenians.

*Thucydides'
account of the
character and
symptoms of
the disease*

The Plague: Thucydides himself was both attacked by the plague and had personal observation of others who suffered from it. He left an account of the character and symptoms of the disease so that if it should break out again, people could recognise it.

*Origin of the
pestilence*

The plague is said to have begun in parts of Ethiopia, thence came down to Egypt and Libya. On the city of Athens it fell suddenly and the first attacks were noticed in Piraeus. From Piraeus it reached Athens. Persons stricken by this dreadful pestilence were at first seized with violent heats in the head and redness and inflammation of the eyes. Throat and tongue and all internal parts assumed bloody tinge and 'emitted an unnatural and fetid breath'. Sneezing and hoarseness, pain in the chest, stomach upset, vomiting, accompanied by extreme restlessness and suffering were the terrible result of the infection. Body temperature was not very high 'but reddish, livid, and broken out in small pimples and sores'. There was an internal burning sensation which made bearing of clothes of the slightest description impossible. To get relief many threw themselves into water-tanks with no better results and the unquenchable thirst was not relieved by drinking of water in excess. The disease did not waste away the body so long as it was at its height. Beginning from the head it descended downwards and affected the extremities. Many of whom had survived lost their toes, fingers, etc., and some even their eyes.

*Symptoms of
the disease*

*Effects of
the disease*

As the disease was more grievous than human nature could endure and proved to be something different from many of the diseases familiar to man, no body, nor the physicians could bring any relief. Such

was the extent of the visitation of this dreadful pestilence that no nurse was available. Many families were left with no survivors. Even cremation of dead bodies became a problem and many corpses were left abandoned. Such was the dreadful effect on the body that birds and beasts of prey did not come near the dead bodies lying unburied, or died after they had tasted them.

*Lack of
treatment and
nursing*

The calamity was aggravated due to the influx from the country-sides to the city itself, and it spread specially among the new arrivals. Due to dearth of houses the newcomers lived in stifling cabins in the hot season which enhanced the rate of mortality. Dying men lay upon one another, half-dead reeled about the streets in search of water. Sacred places where many of the newcomers were quartered were filled with dead bodies. Burial rites were forgotten and instances were not rare when on the funeral pyre arranged for one was thrown the dead bodies by others, or corpses were tossed on the dead body of another that was burning on a pyre.

*Burial
a problem—
burial rites
forgotten*

The general calamity that came upon the people of Athens had serious consequences social, economic and political, and even in human values.

*Results of the
plague*

The plague was the origin of lawless conduct in the city to a greater extent than it had before existed. 'Men now coolly ventured on what had formerly done in a corner'.

*Change in
conduct*

Honour and elegance that characterised the social life was no longer to be seen. The entire society lost all ideas of decorum, and moral depravity replaced the sober liberty of the Athenians. The huge toll taken by the plague made people uncertain of survival and enjoyment of every kind was the order of the day. Human existence was counted by hours in the circumstances and since the doom of fate was thought to hang over everybody's head, no offence against laws, human or divine was felt to be unreasonable. After all, plague which stared each one in the face was

*Honour and
elegance of
Athenian
social life
gone*

*No respect for
law—human
or divine*

far severer a punishment than what law could devise. It naturally appeared reasonable to enjoy life before it was smitten down. No wonder lawless extravagance of worst kind did not prick the conscience of the Athenians.

Change in economic fortunes: enjoyment was the only thought

The ravage of the Peloponnesians without and of the plague within led to rapid change of economic fortunes. Many poor farmers had lost all that they had, the rich lost much and the burden of war bore heavily upon them. Persons in prosperity died to leave their properties to persons who had possessed nothing before. These succeeding to properties, not being sure of survival used them after enjoyment.

Change in the sense of human values

Sense of human values had changed altogether. The society lost its wonted flare for culture. Spending after vile enjoyment of carnal pleasures was now thought both honourable and useful. 'Perseverance in what men called honour was popular with none'.

Effects on the army and navy

Nor was the plague without its effect militarily. There were two visitations of the deadly pestilence, once from 430 to 429 and again in 427 B.C. The plague took a toll of one-third of the Athenian population, and three hundred of one thousand strong cavalry men, four thousand four hundred of fifteen thousand five hundred hoplites died by the pestilence. The major part of these figures died in the course of 430-'27 B.C. The effect of these losses were permanent and the number of new recruits thinned out during the twenty years that followed. 'The land-forces of Athens were so far weakened as to fall to about the level of the Boeotian army.' Naval superiority of Athens was, however, maintained but it became impossible for years to follow, to man such large fleets as before. The oarsmen who were recruited from the Aegean states would not venture themselves in the plague stricken city or risk infection from the Athenian oarsmen. This had its repercussion on the policy of Athenian counter attack on the enemy with naval

help, which was now diminished. Attica was also saved from invasion by the enemy so long as the plague raged in the city.

But perhaps the greatest effect of plague was on the moral of the Athenians, which was very much shaken. The second invasion by the Peloponnesians and the simultaneous outbreak of the pestilence had pressed heavy upon the Athenians. A general despondency and depression seized the Athenians and it was not long that these gave place to anger against Pericles who was now regarded to be the author of their miseries. His policy of no open war with the enemy was now universally assailed. Concentration of the Athenians of the country-side within the linked fortress of Piraeus and Athens was no small cause of the magnitude of the disaster. Further, Athens lost about four thousand of her hoplites in the plague, it would have been better to lose them in the battlefield than allow them to die vainly and ingloriously. "To many at Athens, the plague was more than fortune's criticism of a calculated plan—it was a sign that wrath of heaven rested on their city." When the plague was raging in Athens in all its fury an attempt was made to take Epidaurus and thereby to secure a foothold in the Peloponnesus. Pericles himself was in command, but the attempt was unsuccessful and in the bargain the troops and crews engaged in the expedition were infected by the plague. Sending of troops to Potidaea and an expedition to Epidaurus was now more and more regarded as blunders.

*Political effect
—unpopularity
of Pericles*

*Change in the
Athenian mood
—Pericles
held to be
the author of
their
misfortune*

The result of this change in the Athenian mood was the cry of the people to fix, the taint of blood-guiltiness on Pericles' house. The Athenians wanted to open negotiations for peace with the Lacedaemonians. Envoys were sent but came back unsuccessful, for the Lacedaemonians possibly thought that the plague would fight for them. In the hour of supreme depression Pericles in a speech, which was his last, sought to boost up their drooping spirit.

*Attempt at
opening
negotiations*

*Pericles
summoned
the Assembly*

4/Pericles' Last Speech: Pericles was still the General-in-chief summoned the Assembly with the double object of restoring their confidence and bringing them from angry feelings to a calmer and more hopeful state of mind, for their despair was complete and all ventilated itself upon Pericles.

*Need for
saving the
commonwealth*

Pericles pointed out that the people were unreasonably irritated with him being cowed by their sufferings. After all national greatness was a thing to be more prized than individual interest and not individual well-being through public humiliation. When the country was lost, personal fortunes must be automatically ruined. But individual fortunes might be recovered if the commonwealth was saved.

*Pericles
dwelt upon
his personal
abilities*

Pericles then asserted that he was second to none in the state, he knew what would be proper policy for it and possessed the ability to expound it. In honesty and patriotism as well he was second to none. If all these qualities were conceded in Pericles, he demanded why they should charge him now for having done wrong when they had taken his advice and went to war.

*Justification
for going to
war*

When a people would be free to choose war or peace when their fortune were not in stake, it would be foolish to choose war. But when faced with the alternatives of submission with loss of independence, and war, it must accept the risk with the hope of preserving its independence. Athens had done nothing more than this and if the Athenians took Pericles' advice when unhurt, they had no reason to shrink from the earlier resolution. It was due to the sufferings they had to endure and hope of success being obscure, and particularly due to the unexpected pestilence that their spirit had flagged. But born as the citizens of a great state they should be ready to face the greatest disasters and keep untainted the lustre of their name. 'Cease then to grieve for your private afflictions, and address yourselves instead to the safety of the commonwealth.'

Should the Athenians shrink from war because of the exertions it made necessary in the fear that it might not lead to success, he pointed out that such apprehensions were entirely groundless. For, the Athenian empire extends not only over her allies. The visible field of action before the Athenians had two parts, land and sea. Over the seas Athenians were completely supreme, not merely what they actually had at the moment but also to what further extent conceivable. 'In fine, your naval resources are such that your vessels may go where they please, without the king or any other nation on earth being able to stop them.' To think it to be great privation to lose lands and houses would be needless, for if liberty was preserved by their efforts these would be easily recovered, but if knees were once bowed even what they still possessed would go out of their hands. The Athenians received their possessions from their forefathers, to lose them would be more disgraceful than to be defeated in getting. To continue the war efforts was a judgment grounded upon existing resources of Athens not simply a desperate hope.

*Vision of
Athenian
field of action*

*To bow the
knees would
lead to greater
loss*

Again the country and the posterity had a claim upon the Athenians for defending the glory of Athens and bearing the burden of her imperial honours. 'You should remember also that what you are fighting against is not merely slavery in exchange for independence but also loss of empire and the danger from animosities incurred in its exercise'. To resile from the situation as it was at that time was unthinkable for this would mean servitude though unmolested, and retiring from the present position was not becoming of an imperial city.

*The Athenian
were fighting
in defense of
independence
and empire*

The Athenians had no reason to be angry with Pericles either. After all, if he had voted for war, he only did as they did themselves. Only point where all calculations had failed was the plague and this had a large share in making Pericles unpopular. But the hand of Heaven must be borne with resignation. If

*Pericles'
exhortation
for
continuing the
war*

Athens had the greatest name in the world; it was because she never bent before disaster, a memory worth leaving for the posterity. 'Make your decision, therefore, for glory then and honour now, and attain both objects by instant and zealous effort; do not send heralds to Lacedaemon, and do not betray any sign of being oppressed by your present sufferings'.

*Athenian
rallied to their
wonted
greatness*

*Private griefs
too deep to
leave anger
unsatisfied—
Pericles
charged of
malversation
—his
reinstatement*

In this way Pericles sought to boost up the drooping spirit of the Athenians and divert their thoughts from immediate afflictions. The Athenians rallied to their own greatness and became prepared to make the sacrifices demanded by the war. But their private griefs were too deep. In fact the public feeling against him did not subside until he had been fined for malversation. Not long afterwards, 'according to the way of the multitude', they elected him general again and committed all their affairs to his hands for he was the best man of all for the public necessities. 'His reinstatement as soon as the anger of the Athenians had passed, clear his character: his fault, if it was a fault, was to worship too well an Athens made in his own image.'

*Death of
Pericles
(429 B.C.)*

In 429 B.C. he was elected General-in-chief again, but he was a broken man. He had lost two of his sons by plague and he himself was stricken by it and within three months of assuming office for the third term he died (429 B.C.).

*Rivalry of
leaders*

Pericles' death plunged the city in an unedifying rivalry of leaders none of whom possessed Pericles' greatness or combined the capacities of a military general, a financier and a diplomatist as he did. The farmers and the rich who bore the brunt of the war looked forward to peace with greater longing than the sailors and craftsmen to whom war brought pay and profit but little danger so long as the naval power of Athens was not seriously challenged. These last found leaders of their own class in Eucrates, Lysicles and Cleon who sought to convert the defensive war into a

war of definite triumphant aggression. On the other hand, the generals were elected men, who by position and temperament or training followed the tradition of Periclean strategy. Chief among these was Nicias. But the resources of Athens were so diminished by the Plague, that even if there had been continuity of policy no initiative would have been possible on the Athenian side.

*Initiative lay
with the
Peloponnesians*

Even before the death of Pericles, the Lacedaemonians and their allies sent an expedition against Zacynthus in the summer of 430 B.C. It was a colony of Achaeans from Peloponnese in alliance with Athens. Cnemus was in command of the Peloponnesian fleet of a hundred triremes. The country was ravaged but the inhabitants of Zacynthus fought valiantly and would not submit. The ships, therefore, sailed back home.

*Peloponnesian
naval expedi-
tion against
Zacynthus*

*Expedition
unsuccessful*

Meanwhile diplomatists on either side had not been idle. The Peloponnesians first tried to obtain naval reinforcement from Sicily, but having failed there, perhaps due to ravages of Plague in Sicilian cities, Spartan envoys were sent to Persia to persuade the king to supply funds and join in the war. On their way through Thrace, they approached Sitacles, king of Thrace to forsake Athenian alliance and to march on Potidaea then besieged by the Athenians. They also thought of reaching the Persian king with Sitacles' assistance. But some Athenian ambassadors who happened to be in Thrace induced Sadocus, son of Sitacles, who had adopted Athenian citizenship, to get the Spartan envoys seized and handed over to the Athenians which he did. The Spartan envoys were brought to Athens and immediately put to death. The Spartans took reprisal by slaying all the Athenians they caught on merchant men round the Peloponnesus.

*Spartan envoys
on way to
Persia for
supply of
funds and
inducing her
to join in the*

*Spartan
envoys'
attempt to win
over Sitacles
failed*

Failure of Sparta to induce Sitacles to march on Potidaea sealed the fate of this city. It capitulated. The citizens were allowed to remain as enemies willing to accept any leadership against Athens.

*Fall of
Potidaea*

*Phormio sent
to guard the
entrance of the
Gulf of
Corinth*

In the north-west Athens had the responsibility of defending her friends Corcyra, Cephallenia, Zacynthus and part of Acarnians. Admiral Phormio was stationed at Naupactus, guarding the entrance of the Corinthian Gulf, with twenty ships. The Spartan general Cnemus crossed over to Acarnian in order to wrest that region from the Athenians. A Corinthian fleet added to the ships from other Peloponnesian states sailed in his support. But Cnemus' land-forces met with reverse and as the campaign clearly broke down, the troops dispersed to their several homes.

*Cnemus'
reverse on land*

*First naval
victory of
Phormio*

The reverse on land was followed by reverses by sea. Phormio waited until the Corinthian fleet met with his squadron at the mouth of the gulf. By skilful handling of his small squadron he crowded the enemy ships into a narrow space when the breeze from the gulf threw them into confusion. Signal was given at this time for charging and the Athenian squadron scattered the Peloponnesian fleet with a loss of 12 ships. Phormio then returned to Naupactus and the Peloponnesian fleet fled to Dyme. The fleet from Corinth fled to Cyllene for safety where the defeated general and admirals were met by three commissioners from Sparta. They were Timverates, Brasidas and Lycophron who were sent with the message to fight another better-managed battle and not to be shut off the seas by a few ships. 'With the advent of Brasidas came courage and skill and the fleet prepared to renew the battle, while their allies were instructed to send reinforcements.'

*Preparation
for second
naval
engagement*

Phormio got intelligence of the Peloponnesian preparation and sent urgent request for reinforcement. The Athenians despatched 20 ships to go there and the deserted city was presently occupied by settlers sent from Athens. The siege cost Athens 2,000 talents and it has been doubted if the achievement was worth the price.

More important than the capture of Potidaea was the need to secure Athenian power in the

Thrace-ward districts. Three generals who conducted the siege of Potidaea with 2,000 hoplites, and 200 cavalry advanced against the Chalcidians and Boeotians in May 429 B.C. They hoped to win over Spartolus with the help of a party among the inhabitants who were friendly disposed towards Athens. But the Chalcidians sent military help to Spartolus and drove off the Athenians with the loss of all the three generals and 430 hoplites. The Athenian army withdrew. The Athenians then arranged through their envoys headed by Hagnon to arrange with Sitacles a joint attack on Chalcidians and Perdiccas. Sitacles appeared with an army numbering 150,000 men and overran Macedonia on the way and then proceeded against Chalcidice not to find any Athenian fleet in support, but a few Athenians to receive them with presents. According to Thucydides the Athenians doubting that Sitacles would not come did not send their fleet, but perhaps the real cause was that Sitacles was too powerful an ally joint action with whom at any event would subordinate the Athenian interest to his. Perdiccas contrived a marriage of his daughter Stratonice with Senthes, nephew of Sitacles who urged retreat of Sitacles. The Athenians, however, did not lose any hold on any of her coast towns but Chalcidians, Boeotians and Perdiccas remained determined enemies of Athens. But counting on the usual dilatoriness of the Spartans, the Athenian reinforcement went to Crete to win over the city of Cydonia. Phormio looked in vain for reinforcement when the Peloponnesians without loss of time arrived. The enemy ships numbered 77 and Phormio's fleet numbered only twenty. But the Peloponnesian ships commanded by Cnemus, Brasidas and other Spartans swooped down upon Naupactus. Nine of the Athenian ships were cut off but the remaining eleven ships routed their pursuers and retook the captured vessels. This was the second victory of Phormio.

*Athenian move
towards
North-East*

*Sitacles'
friendship
betrayed by
Athens*

*Athens held
the coast
towns but
enemies in
Chalcidians,
Boeotians and
Perdiccas*

*Second naval
victory of
Phormio*

The moral effect of this second reverse of the

*Effects of
Phormio's
victories*

Peloponnesians was decisive, the Peloponnesian fleet retired to Corinth. At this stage reinforcement of twenty ships sent by Athens reached from Crete. Cnemus cooped in the Gulf of Corinth sent his men by land to Megara where from with forty ships which were rather in a bad way Cnemus thought of surprising Piraeus but hastily retired in the face of strong Athenian opposition from within Piraeus and on the appearance of an Athenian fleet at sea. The only thing achieved by the Peloponnesians was the destruction of a station in the North of Salamis. Reinforcement of 1,000 men sent by Perdiccas came too late. Phormio made a triumphal progress along the coast of Acarnian and at Astacus restored the influence of the friends of Athens and expelled those who were opposed to her.

*Phormio's
disgrace*

Early in 428 B.C. Phormio returned to Athens with the prizes and prisoners of war. But instead of receiving the grateful admiration of the people he was accused of peculation and was disgraced. Here we lose sight of Phormio. His son Asopus was elected general and on the request of the Acarnians was sent to resume his father's work along the Acarnian coast.

*No invasion
of Attica in
429 B.C.*

The Plague saved Attica from the invasion by the Peloponnesians in 429 B.C. Plataea guarded the road link between Thebes and Attica. Archidamus moved his army into the Plataean territory and offered them the choice of strict neutrality or to be in the safe-keeping of Sparta till the war was over. The Plataeans consulted their 'ancient ally' Athens. The Athenians encouraged resistance and the Plataeans thus encouraged refused the offers of Archidamus, where upon the Peloponnesians laid a siege of the city. The city held fast and the Peloponnesians had to bear the tedium of an eighteen months' siege. They then set fire to the city which as it happened, was extinguished by a sudden thunderstorm, saving the inmates within the city from sure death. The Peloponnesians now built a double wall round the city to shut in the city

*Peloponnesian
siege of
Plataea*

*Siege with-
stood long
enough*

and shut out any reinforcement from Athens. A part of the wall was placed under the charge of a portion of the Peloponnesian army and the rest under the charge of the Boeotians. The Athenians did not come to the assistance of the Plataeans as promised and the surrender of the city became a question of days.

*No Athenian
help—
surrender
inevitable*

Estimate of Pericles: In 429 B.C., hardly a year after his reinstatement as General-in-chief that Pericles, the first citizen of Athens, died. By a strange irony of fate, that man of will and determination, became so low in spirit that he could not escape an amulet being hung round his neck by his female relations—completely a passive subject at the hands of others. 'And yet over-all Athenians of all time there towers this one superb figure of Pericles, patriot and orator.'

*Death
(429 B.C.)*

Pericles' character has been presented in very different lights by different writers both contemporary and of the posterity. His immense and long-continued supremacy, his unparalleled eloquence are fact attested not only by his friends but also by his enemies. He had all along been systematically ridiculed by the comic stage which was under the influence of the aristocrats. Plato, the philosopher who disapproved of the political activities of Pericles as also of the moral effects that he had produced upon Athens, nevertheless praises his intellectual and oratorical ascendancy—his majestic intelligence. Plutarch eulogises him for his conduct towards his political opponents, which was always mild and liberal, amidst the hottest political animosities. "Pericles" remarks Plutarch "undoubtedly deserved admiration, not only for the candour and moderation which he ever retained, amidst the distractions of his business and the rage of his enemies, but for that noble sentiment which led him to think it his most excellent attainment, never to have given way to envy or anger, notwithstanding the greatness of his power, not to have nourished an impacable hatred against his greatest foe."

*Character
differently
presented by
different
writers:*

Comic stage

Plato

Plutarch

*Completion of
Athenian
democracy*

In the internal politics Pericles, along with Ephialtes completed the Athenian democracy and had thrown the opportunities to serve the state to all citizens rich or poor. To facilitate the poorer section of the peoples' taking part in the affairs of the state he made arrangement for payment to citizens taking part in the business of the state.

*Pericles'
attempt at
building up
continental
empire
partially
successful but
short-lived*

He followed up the plan of Themistocles in fortifying Athens and Piraeus in his efforts to make Athens the leading power in the Hellas. Pericles was an imperialist statesman and aimed at building up both continental and maritime empire. In the former attempt he succeeded only partially and for a time only, and the curtain was drawn by the battle of Coronea. The maritime empire which was carved out of the confederacy of Delos, originally a voluntary association of states, was far more stable. To strengthen it, Pericles set himself to the consolidation of his country's ascendancy and resources.

*Consolidation
of maritime
empire*

*Imperial aims
of Pericles*

Pericles' aim did not stop with attainment of political ascendancy, he also wanted to make Athens the Queen and Mistress of the Hellas and thereby worthy of her imperial position. Athens was to be the cultural nerve-centre of the Greek world, she was to be the leader of a Pan-Hellenic union which was to be held together by the power of Athens and supported by the community of religion, language, customs and traditions of the Greeks. When his Pan-Hellenic ideal failed due to stubborn resistance of Sparta, Pericles decided to go it alone and succeeded in making Athens the Queen and the instructress of the Hellas. For this, Prof. Bury regards his imperialism as of a lofty kind.

*Charges
against
Pericles:*

But the main charges against Pericles were quite numerous and these came mostly from his political opponents.

First, Pericles has been charged with sacrificing the permanent well-being and morality of the state

to the maintenance of his own political power, of corrupting the people by distributions of public money. But these were allegations which were in themselves honourable, for conversion of Athens into a full democracy could only succeed when payments were made to throw political duties open to the poorer section of the people. With regard to his vicious appetite for immediate popularity, Thucydides absolves him. This was what Thucydides in the most pointed manner denies and not merely denies but contrasts Pericles with his successors who did so, but he did not. According to Thucydides 'Pericles, powerful from dignity of character as well as from wisdom, and conspicuously above the least tinge of corruption, held back the people with free hand, and was their real leader instead of being led by them. For not being a seeker of power from unworthy sources, he did not speak with any view to present favour, but had sufficient sense of dignity to contradict them on occasion, even braving their displeasure.' Further, if the internal political changes were meant to earn political ascendancy, it must be pointed out that the changes respecting Areopagus and the dicasteries were effected when Pericles was a young man when he could not be supposed to have much political weight. These changes must be ascribed to the party with which Pericles was connected rather than to himself. He was a born democrat and carried out the principles of his party without any concealment. Thucydides also does not consider such political changes to be injurious to the permanent well-being of the Athenian state. Again Pericles was not the author of the Athenian character, he found it with its marked, positive characteristics and susceptibilities among which he improved those were best.

*Sacrificing
permanent
well-being
and morality
of the state
for own
political power*

*Charge
refuted*

Secondly, Pericles has been charged with setting a strong state on downward path. 'Themistocles made a weak state strong. Pericles set a strong state upon the downward path. His is the brilliance of a sunseting amid the clouds of gathering storm, the Louis XIV of

*Weakening of
the Athenian
state*

Athens'. His strategy in the Peloponnesian War, his strategy of exhaustion and his 'fort-scheme', his use of land-forces in operation against Megara and Potidaea while using the Athenian fleet to small purposes lend support to the above criticism. But A. Holm rightly points out that in those days generalship had no doubt become an art and Pericles during long thirty years of his career as an Athenian statesman never had time to make a practical study of military science. 'A man who had to conduct the home and foreign policy of a state like Athens . . . could not possibly be a great general as well even if had talent for military details. We believe, too, that a man who was as careful of the lives of his fellow citizens as Pericles, lacked the recklessness which is sometimes necessary in war.' He was a good war minister but not more. He was at best an admiral rather than a general.

Defence

*Imperialism
earned enmity
of other states
including
Athens' allies*

Thirdly, Pericles' imperial policy, it has been said, earned the enmity of not only of the neighbouring states led by Sparta but of the Athenian allies themselves. Athenian empire was a negation of the Greek sense of independence and conversion of the equal partners of a confederacy—a voluntary union naturally made the Athenian allies inimically disposed towards her. Grievances of the Athenian allies accounted mainly for the breakdown of the Athenian empire. If Athens under Pericles became the school of the Hellas it was a hard school and taught much that was evil.

Defence

But as Plutarch has pointed out, the influence of Athens was co-extensive with that of Pericles. In those days Athens was looked upon as the city of enlightenment, but as insignificant from political point of view, whereas empires as for instance, that of the Mongols were regarded with admiration. 'Athens of the fifth century was a great state in a higher sense than most of the kingdoms of the Middle Ages. The historians of antiquity have not laid stress on the great political power of Athens because it lasted for so short a time. But for a pace of half a century it was quite on par with

that of Persia. The policy of Athens during the period from 480–430 B.C. is one of the most brilliant phenomena of history, and the Athenian empire is the true precursor of those of Macedonia and Rome.' Herein lies the defence of the Periclean imperialism.

Much of the charges against Pericles had been due to the partisan spirit which influenced most of the Greek writers whose works were animated against the Athenian democracy, so that they condemned in principle Pericles, the champion of democracy. Our judgement of Pericles is based on the immovable foundation—the testimony of Thucydides, and Thucydides sums up: 'Pericles owes the authoritative position which he occupies in the Athenian state, neither to cunning nor force, but exclusively to the trust of his fellow citizens, their trust in the tried greatness of his spirit, the universally recognised purity of his character, the immovable firmness of his will.' Estimating him as a whole, with his power of thought, speech and action, and his civil and military competence, his vigorous and cultivated intellect, his incorruptibility, caution, firmness in a country and at a time when these qualities were rare, Pericles will be found without a parallel throughout the entire course of Grecian history. 'He stood, in truth, above the people whom he ruled as a prince, raised even above the suspicion of dishonesty, raised above the reproach of cringing submissiveness, he stood firm in his superior influence on the resolution of the multitude, because he had not gained possession of it by the employment of unseemly means, but through the esteem of the citizens for his aptitude for government. He did not give way to the changing fancies and moods of the moment. He met the anger of the multitude with unflinching pride, he brought the insolent to their senses and encouraged the faint-hearted to self-confidence. It was democracy in appearance only, in deed and truth it was the rule of an individual man, of the greatest of the great, over the people.

Conclusion

*Third
invasion of
Attica
(428 B.C.)*

5/**Fourth Year of the War: Revolt of Mitylene:**

The fourth year of the Peloponnesian War opened with the third invasion of Attica by Archidamus. The Athenian cavalry, as usual, attacked the invaders whenever it was practicable preventing the attackers from advancing near the city. After a time, the invaders retired and dispersed to their several cities.

*Lesbian
towns*

The most remarkable event in the Peloponnesian War, was the revolt of Mitylene. The island of Lesbos which was in alliance with Athens comprised five Aeolian towns which although connected one or the other way were independent of one another. The strategic position of Mitylene and its excellent harbour helped her to rise above the four others. Smaller towns of Pyrrha, Antisea and Eresus had joined Mitylene absolutely and unconditionally. Methymna, another small town did not join Mitylene. The Lesbians sent contingents of ships to Athens, commanded by Lesbian themselves, they paid no tribute to Athens. The fate of Samos, however, made these smaller towns of Lesbos as also of Chios to suspect Athenian intention towards small towns. The more such suspicion began to grow, the more they were inclined to revolt. Thus were the Mityleneans prepared for the revolt and immediately after the Peloponnesian invasion, the whole of Lesbos except Methymna followed Mitylene in revolt.

*Mitylene took
the lead in
revolt*

*Secret
Mitylenean
plan for long*

Revolt of Mitylene did not come upon the Athenians wholly unawares, although the idea of a revolt was of longer standing than suspected by the Athenians. The Mityleneans had made secret application to Sparta for help but without success. But with the outbreak of hostilities the Mityleneans renewed their attempts for obtaining Spartan help. The aristocratic elements were very strong in Mitylene. Everything regarding the plan of the revolt was kept profoundly secret.

The revolt was not due to any special grievances or any sense of humiliation. The oligarchical government

of Mitylene would confess that the city was always well-treated and honoured by Athens. The revolt could therefore be explained as an expression of the Hellenic instinct for fullest independence, for the sovereignty of the Lesbian cities was limited in matters of foreign policy, their relationship with other members of the confederacy was controlled by Athens. The fate of Samos made Athenians suspect, for they now feared that this would presently be their own case as well.

Causes of the revolt

The reasons for the revolt were, thus mainly two: *First*, the Mityleneans had no security that Athens would not degrade them to the condition of the subject allies like the rest of the confederacy. *Secondly*, the Mityleneans were not willing to be a party to a war for the sake of maintaining an empire essentially offensive to Greek political instinct.

Two real causes

The revolt had to be hastened in the end because the plan was betrayed by Methymna and Tenedos. The news was very much unwelcome, in fact, too dangerous to be readily believed. But soon Athens made up her mind and decided not to evade the challenge to her authority. Envoys were sent to warn the Mityleneans against these suspicious activities and demand an immediate stoppage of the same. The demand was refused. The Athenians then decided to fit out an expedition which was to take Mitylene by surprise. Cleippides was despatched with a squadron of forty triremes, but on his arrival off Mitylene found the town to be in a posture of good defence. This was because it was forewarned by a Mitylenean citizen who happened to be at Athens when decision to surprise the island was taken by the Athenian Assembly. They quickly applied to the Peloponnesians, with whom, doubtlessly, they had been negotiating from long before, for help.

Plan betrayed

Athens to surprise Mitylene

The Athenian fleet now blockaded the city and after several little engagements the Mityleneans were reduced to extremities. The envoys from Mitylene at

*Blockade of Mitylene**

*Economic
weakness of
Athens*

length prevailed upon the Spartans to send them a fleet to relieve their city. Meanwhile Paches arrived with an army of 1,000 hoplites to complete the investment. The oars of the ships were drawn by the hoplites in order to save pressure on Athenian treasury. The costly siege of Potidaea, loss of Attic trade due to the Plague, loss of tribute from the Thrace-ward region, refusal by the cities in Caria and Lycia to pay tribute, etc., had ruinous effects on the Athenian treasury. For the first time as a free democracy the Athenians had to impose upon themselves an *Eisphora*, i.e. a property tax which brought 200 talents to the Athenian treasury. Ships were despatched to raise tributes from the allies.

Eisphora

*Spartan
assurance of
help:
Coming of
Salaethus*

With the arrival of Paches Mitylene was besieged both by land and sea and its fall was a question of time unless Peloponnesian help arrived. Toward the winter of 428 B.C. the Mitylenean position became desperate. Sparta sent a commander Salaethus who somehow made his way into the city to assure the Mityleneans of Peloponnesian support which would arrive. Salaethus undertook the command in the city and exhorted the Mityleneans to be courageous and persevering. They were expected to endure famine and hardship in the hope of Peloponnesian help—an empty assurance which was anything but liked by the Mityleneans. In May, 427 B.C. Attica was invaded. Within a month's time a Peloponnesian fleet of 40 triremes under the command of the Spartan admiral Alcidas reached Delos evading the Athenian fleet. But it arrived too late, Mitylene had surrendered in the mean time. The fleet of Alcidas had wasted time about the Peloponnesus and thereby defeated the advantage of two front attack simultaneously, namely the invasion of Attica already started and naval engagement off Mitylene. But delay defeated the possible advantages of the plan.

*Fall of
Mitylene:
Alcidas
arrives too
late
to save
Mitylene*

The city fell and the oligarchs surrendered to Paches. The Athenians were to decide their fate.

Salaethus was sent to Athens along with some of the ring leaders of the revolt of Mitylene. Salaethus was at once put to death there.

*Ring leaders
of the revolt
sent to Athens*

The Athenian Assembly was persuaded to decree the indiscriminate slaughter of the prisoners sent to Athens but also of all Mityleneans of military age, whether democrats or oligarchs and the enslavement of all women and children. 'This ferocious folly, the *reductio ad absurdum* of Periclean imperialism was not consummated, for Athenians though swift to anger, were not without pity and intelligence.' A ship was despatched with the above terrible command to Mitylene. But the next day the Athenian Assembly reversed its decree due to the reasoned statesmanship and persuasion of Diodotus. Cleon supported the mass slaughter on the grounds of legal justice and good policy. But Thucydides represents Diodotus as having argued that the question for Athens was not what the Mityleneans deserved but what was expedient for Athens to inflict. His arguments prevailed over the angry rhetoric of Cleon and by a narrow majority the decree was reversed. The ship that carried the news of the reprieve had to overtake the ship that had carried the decree of the doom and had the start of a full day and night, and it reached just in time to save the lives. The ring leaders who had been brought to Athens as prisoners were executed. The walls of Mitylene were rased, its fleet had to be surrendered to Athens. Apart from the faithful Methymna the lands of the Lesbians were divided into 3,000 lots and leaving one-tenth of these for the gods, the rest were made Athenian cleruchies. The Athenians now occupied the island of Nisaea off Megara in order to secure against surprises like that of 429 B.C.

*Athenian
decree of mass
slaughter
Cleon's
persuasion*

*Decree
reversed on
Diodotus'
arguments*

*Mitylenean
wall rased:
Lesbian lands
parcelled out
into Athenian
cleruchies,
i.e. colonies*

The revolt of Mitylene was significant in more than one way. The revolt was an unprovoked blow at Athens, it was not due to any special grievance that the Mityleneans would possibly complain of. The revolt attained its special significance and interest

*Significance
of the revolt:*

•

(a) *Protest
of Hellenic
instinct of
freedom
against
Athenian
empire*

because of the fact that Mityleneans, on the admission of the oligarchical government there, were always well-treated and honoured by Athens. Its real significance, therefore, lay in the fact that 'It was a protest of the Hellenic instinct for absolute autonomy against an empire such as the Athenian.' The sovereignty of the Lesbian cities was limited with regard to their foreign policy which was controlled by Athens. Their relation with other members of the confederacy was also controlled by Athens. Lesbian cities had to send contingents in ships for Athenian purpose. All this was naturally irksome.

(b) *A commentary on
the Spartan
programme
of freeing the
Greeks*

The revolt was also significant by the way that it showed the lukewarm leadership that Sparta gave to her allies. The Mityleneans were admitted to Peloponnesian confederacy and promise of help was given. But events clearly demonstrated the hollowness of the promise and the whole affair from the false hopes with which the Mityleneans had been lured to their ruin. The enterprise of Alcidas, which atoned for the rashness of its conception by the timidity of its execution, was a fine commentary on the Spartan programme of freeing the Greeks, and a welcome strengthening of the prestige of Athens. 'The reduction of Mitylene marks the revival of Athenian vigour.'

(c) *Added
prestige of
Athens*

(d) *Fatal to
Plataea:
Dangerous to
Athenian
influence in
the North-
West*

But the pre-occupation of Athens with the affairs of Mitylene had proved fatal to Plataea to which Athens gave assurances of help but actually did not send any, and had seriously endangered Athenian influence in the North-West.

(e) *Economic
weakness:
Tax and
tribute:
Discontent of
the rich
Athenians and
resentment of
the Allies*

The need for financing the war against revolted Mitylene revealed the economic weakness Athens was suffering from due to the Plague and consequential loss in Attic trade, costly siege of Potidaea and loss of tribute from the Thrace-ward allies. Refusal by the cities in Caria and Lycia to pay tribute while had their ruinous effect on the Athenian treasury, was symptomatic of the resentment among the allies about

the tribute, so revolting to the Greek sentiments. A property tax on the rich Athenians and collection of tribute from the allies were the ways of replenishing the treasury. But the immediate danger of this policy was the exhaustion and discontent of the rich Athenians and the resentment of the Allies.

The Mitylenean revolt was symptomatic of the general resentment that Athenian imperialism had roused among the allies. 'The Empire was a tyranny.'

(f) Symptomatic of the general discontent

6/Fall of Plataea : The Athenian pre-occupation with revolted Mitylene sealed the doom of Plataea. Despite assurances received by the Plataeans from Athens that she would not desert them, the assurances were not fulfilled. Shortage of provisions and the impossibility of forcing the raising of siege through fighting led to the decision of escape from the city. On a dark night of heavy rains half the garrison at Plataea crossed the enemy's line and reached Athens. Their departure enabled the remaining half of the garrison to hold out longer on the store of provisions. But by August, 427 B.C. they were so weakened by famine that they decided to surrender with no hope except Plataea's services to Greece during the Persian War and the mercy of the Spartans. The malice of the Thebans destroyed all such hopes for they pointed out that Plataeans stood by Athens and slaughtered their Theban prisoners four years back. 200 Plataeans and 25 Athenians were put to death and the women were sold as slaves. The city was raised to the ground and the land became property of the Theban state. Plataea ceased to exist and those of the Plataeans who survived were solaced by conferment of Athenian citizenship. There was a family likeness between the affairs of Mitylene and those of Potidaea. What the Athenians had done with Mitylene, the Spartans did with Potidaea except the humanity shown by the Athenians towards the Mityleneans on a second thought.

Athens failed to fulfil assurances of help

Escape of half the garrison

Surrender of Plataea

Plataeans done to death: City raised to the ground

Mitylene and Potidaea—similarity of fate

*Intrigue by
the Corinthian
interest*

*Oligarchy vs
Democracy*

*Peithias
killed*

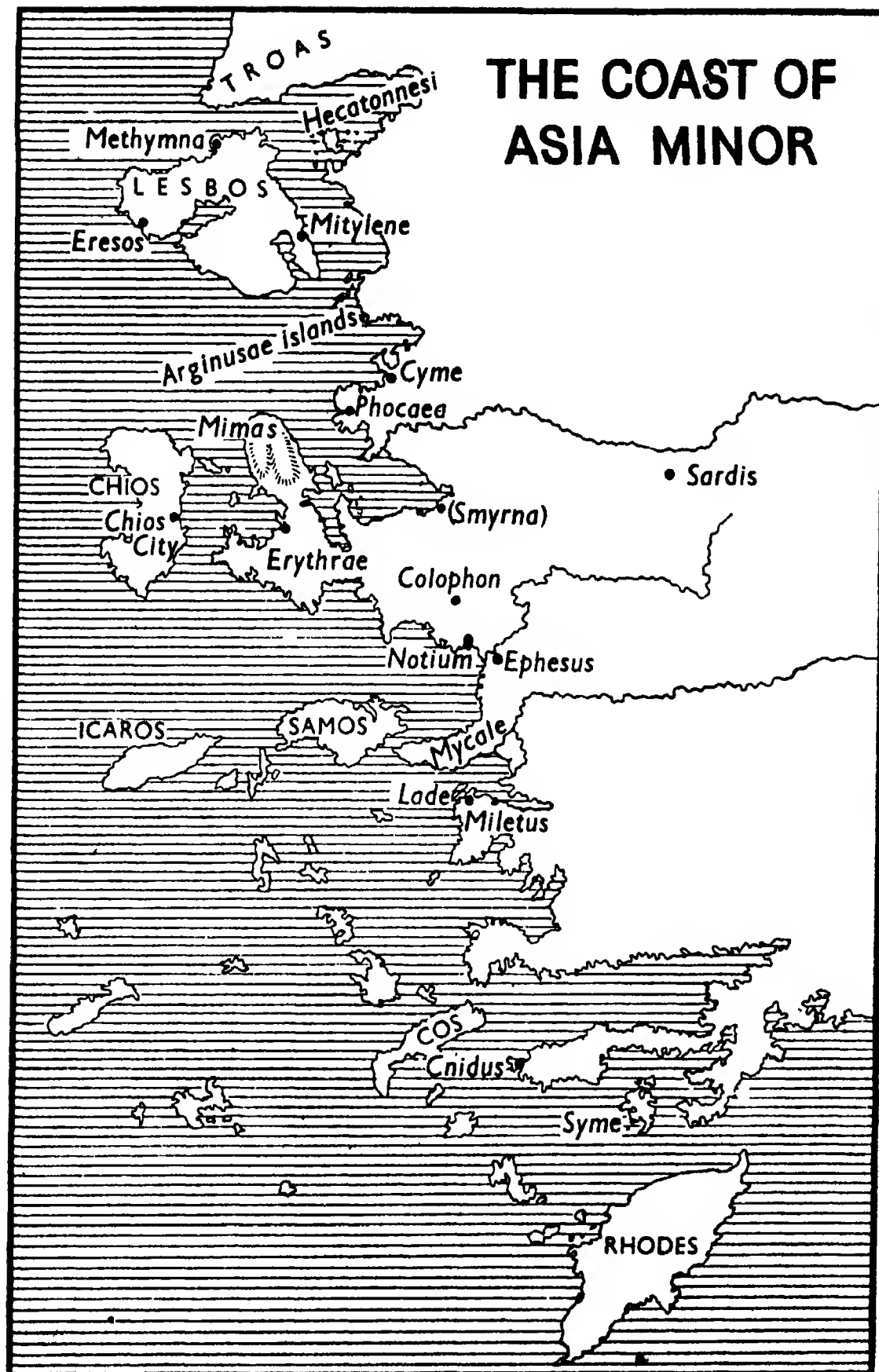
*Arrival of
Athenian
ships under
Nicostratus*

*Oligarch's
insincerety:
Civil War
renewed*

*Arrival of
Peloponnesian
fleet:
Athenian
retreat*

7/Revolt of Corcyra : In the Epidamnian War some Corcyraeans were taken prisoners by Corinth. But they were released on condition that they would win over Corcyra from the Athenian alliance. The efforts of these Corcyraeans on their return eventually dividing the Corcyraeans into two parties and producing a Civil War. The cleavage between these two parties were bound up with the question of Peloponnesian and Athenian alliance. The oligarchical party favouring the former, the democratic party favouring the latter. The intriguers of the Corinthian interest siding with the oligarchical faction first prosecuted Peithias the leader of the people on the ground that he was conspiring to make Corcyra a subject of Athens. But Peithias was acquitted. He then retorted by prosecuting five richest men of the oligarchical party for cutting the vinepoles in the sanctuaries of Zeus and Alcinous. They were found guilty on trial and were fined heavily and on their being refused permission to pay the fine by instalments they suddenly rushed into the Senate House and killed Peithias and sixty others. The oligarchs now attacked the people and a Civil War began (427 B.C.). But with the arrival of 12 Athenian ships from Naupactus under Nicostratus an agreement was arrived at between the two parties. But the democrats persuaded Nicostratus to leave behind five ships to keep order, for they would not trust the oligarchs. He was to take with him five Corcyraean ships as substitutes, the crews of which were chosen from the oligarchs who would be in all reality be hostages for the behaviour of the oligarchs in Corcyra. But the crews fled and took refuge in a temple. This was taken as good proof of the criminal design of the oligarchs and the democrats took up arms again. The oligarchs then fled to an island off the coast.

A few days after the above incident Alcidas the Spartan admiral led an expedition of 53 ships to Corcyra in defence of the oligarchs. In a naval engagement off the Corcyraean harbour the Corcyraeans



fought badly and the Athenians who fought in support were forced to retreat. The retreating Athenian ships were not pursued and soon after on the news that an Athenian squadron of sixty ships was on its way to Corcyra, the Peloponnesian fleet returned home.

News of the arrival of Athenian squadron: Peloponnesian retreat

This was followed by a cruel and inhuman orgy of violence against the oligarchs. Without any regard to honour or policy the democrats gave vent to their vindictive passion against the oligarchs—the enemies of their liberty. Some were tried and executed, many committed suicide others who were suspected of being opposed to democracy were killed. ‘Every form of death was to be seen, and everything, and more than everything that commonly happens in revolutions happened then. The father slew the son, and the suppliants were torn from the temples and slain near them; some of them were even walled up in the temple of Dionysus and there perished. To such extremes of cruelty did revolution go; and this seemed to be the worst of revolutions because it was the first.’

Democratic violence

Yet, if the democrats cannot be excused for these horrible excesses, the victims of the democratic fury deserve small compassion. It was they who set the example of violence by killing the leader of the people and sixty others within the senate-house. The Corcyraean revolution made a profound impression in Greece and the revolutionary spirit released from Corcyra soon began to disturb the states of the Greek world. Party divisions were encouraged and whether for the hope or fear of foreign intervention, the oligarchs looked to Sparta and democrats to Athens for help. The diseased condition of the political life in the city-states of Greece has been nicely described by Thucydides. He remarks that in Greece the meaning of words had no longer the same relation to things. ‘Reckless daring was held to be loyal courage; prudent delay was the excuse of a coward; moderation was the disguise of unmanly weakness; to know everything was to do nothing. Frantic energy was the true

Revolutionary spirit spreads to rest of Greece

Thucydides' description of the diseased political life of Greece

quality of a man. Lover of violence was always trusted and his opponents suspected.' In this way, the laws both human and heavenly were set aside amid the impatience of party spirit, eagerness of ambition, zeal of contention and the carryings of revenge.

*Return of
oligarchs:
Plunder of the
Corcyraeans—
to
and
nth*

*Occupation of
Mount Istone*

*Arrival of
Athenian fleet:
Conditional
surrender by
the oligarchs*

*Fall of
Mount Istone*

*Corcyraean
cruelty*

With the departure of the Athenian fleet under Eurymedon, about five hundred Corcyraean oligarchical exiles took some forts on the main land and began to plunder their countrymen. They did so much damage that a severe famine was caused in the city of Corcyra. In the mean time they sent their envoys to Sparta and Corinth for assistance for their restoration. But this proving unavailing they went up to Mount Istone and fortifying themselves there began deprecations of the country. This they did for two years. In 425 B.C. an Athenian fleet under Eurymedon and Sophocles which was bound for Sicily arrived at Corcyra and helped the Corcyraean democrats to storm the fort on Mount Istone. The oligarchs surrendered on condition that their fate should be determined by the Athenian people. The Athenian generals placed them in the isle of Ptychia on condition that they would not escape. But the Corcyraean democrats apprehending that the oligarchs would not be punished with death by the Athenians played a stratagem. They were induced to leave the island in disregard of their terms of agreement with the Athenian generals. On the breach of the agreement the Athenians handed them over to the Corcyraeans. They were shut up in a building and brought out in batches on the false pretext of removing them to another prison and smitten at anybody's choice. But after three batches had been thus executed the falsehood was detected and the rest would not come out of the building. The Corcyraeans attacked them through the roof of the building in which they were shut up, which they tore off. To avoid protracted agony the prisoners committed suicide one night. At dawn the corpses were carried outside the city. The Corcyraean

revolution ended in this fashion. The oligarchical faction at Corcyra was utterly annihilated and the democrats were left in peace.

*End of
Corcyraean
revolution :
Annihilation
of the
Oligarchs*

8/Athenian Intervention in Sicily : In 445 B.C. Syracuse had become very powerful in Sicily as a result of her victory over her rival Acragas. Her navy had also been increased to a great strength in the decade preceding the Archidamian War. When the Peloponnesian War began, the Peloponnesians entertained high hopes of help from Syracuse by sea. Syracuse having been pre-occupied with her own ambitions and the fear roused in her due to the complications created by the Athenian allies in Sicily at the dictation of the Athenians, could not send any help to the Peloponnesians.

*Syracuse
friend of the
Peloponnesians*

Sicilian cities of Leontini and Rhegium were allies of Athens. In this way during the early years of the Peloponnesian War Sicilian towns were formed into rival groups. The Ionian cities naturally expecting support from Athens while Syracuse which was at the head of the Dorian cities in Sicily had her sympathies on the side of Peloponnesians. Rhegium was an Italian city, but was on the side of Athens. This was, however, balanced by Locri which sided with the Dorian combination.

*Ionian cities
of Sicily
allied to
Athens :
Syracuse the
head of the
Dorian cities
allied to the
Peloponnesus*

In 427 B.C. these two opposing groups entered into open hostilities in which the Ionians had the worst of it. Leontini sent envoys to Athens insisting on the fulfilment by Athens her agreement with the Sicilian Ionian cities. To allow Leontini or for that matter, the Ionian group of states to be defeated by Syracuse was to pave the way for Syracuse's coming to the assistance of her mother country Corinth, with her powerful navy. Athenians, therefore, voted to dispatch 20 ships to the aid of the Ionian cities in Sicily, under the command of Laches and Charoeades towards the end of 427 B.C. But the small squadron of ships with a small body of troops sent showed that the

*Open hostili-
ties between
the Ionian and
Dorian
groups of
cities*

*Leontini's
appeal to
Athens for*

expedition was sent with a strictly limited objective—the maintenance of a political equilibrium in Sicily. Peloponnesians would get supplies of corn from Sicily. The war made it all the more, necessary for the Peloponnesians to import corn from Sicily wherefrom they enjoyed favourable terms because of the sympathy of the Dorian states.

*Limited
purpose of the
expedition—
purpose
essentially
defensive*

A blockade by Athens could have prevented this corn trade and thereby for the Peloponnesians to work in the field instead of fighting. But Athens was not in a position to make such a blockade effective. In the circumstances if Athens could make the Sicilians fight and not attend to their work in the field the Peloponnesians would not be in a position to obtain supplies from Sicily and be bound to work in the field rather than fight. In this way, the Athenian plan was essentially defensive. But apart from this plan of the generals, Cleon and his understudy Hyperbolus spoke of the conquest of the whole of Sicily. The expedition, to them, was the first step in a long and glorious road.

*Rhegium
base of
Athenian
operations*

Laches made Rhegium his base and carried on minor operations against the northern coast of Sicily, and renewing an old alliance with Segesta, gained a victory over Mylae and won over Messana. In Southern Italy Laches did not succeed in achieving much. Locri was too strong for him and at Inessa he sustained a defeat with the other general Charoeades killed. But in 426 B.C. the tide of the war began to turn against the Athenian allies in Sicily. Need for Athenian reinforcement in fleet was felt. General Pythodorus was sent to supersede Laches and announce the coming of a naval reinforcement. But Pythodorus proved inefficient or rather unfortunate and lost Messana won by Laches, thereby Syracuse re-opened communications with Locri. Rhegium was isolated and attempts to regain Messana proved unavailing.

*Tide turns in
favour of
Syracuse:
Loss of
Messana*

The Ionian Greeks in Sicily gradually became

convinced that the Athenian policy in Sicily was essentially a defensive one and Athens wanted a continuance of balanced wars in Sicily. Those Athenians who were more ambitious, wanted to conquer both the Ionians and the Dorians. The alternative, in the circumstances before the Ionian cities of Sicily was either to become cat's-paw in the hands of Athens or to make a reasonable peace with Syracuse. Hermocrates, the Syracusan statesman, realised that the interests of his city would be best served by a peace treaty which excluded the Athenians from Sicily rather than to try for a difficult victory. In 424 B.C. at the *Conference of Gela*, a general peace was agreed upon which removed the justification of the presence of the Athenian fleet in Sicily. The Athenian general had to acquiesce in the inevitable and returned home leaving the Sicilian cities in peace with one another. For this, Eurymedon, the Athenian general, was fined and his colleagues banished by the Athenian people. In 422 B.C. when Cleon's influence in Athens was supreme, an envoy called Phaeax was sent to Sicily and Italian Greek colonies to fish in the troubled water of inter-state conflict. But the mission could achieve nothing. But a few years later the Athenians regarding Sicily to be a *covetable* prize and finding that Syracuse had not proved to be a very formidable rival assumed the policy of conquering Sicily.

*Athenian
policy
understood
by Sicilian
Ionians*

*Conference
at Gela—
peace among
Greek cities*

*Withdrawal
of Athenian
fleet*

*Cleon's policy
of conquest
of Sicily*

The intervention against Syracuse was defensive in its inception but its result generally was that Athens had overcome, or at least neutralised the attack upon her interests. There were signs that the old vigour and initiative were returning. But during the winter of 427-26 B.C. there was a second visitation of Plague in Athens, which depleted the fighting strength of Athens as also of the treasury. Dearth of the crews led to the depletion in the number of the fleets. The spirit of the Athenians, however, remained as high as ever and in 426 B.C., they elected Eurymedon in preference to Nicias who was opposed to adventurism, although

*Revival of old
vigour and
initiative in
Athens*

*Second
visitation of
the Plague
(427-26 B.C.)*

*Cleon and the
demagogues
ascendant in
Athens*

Laches who belonged to the party of Nicias was left with the command of Sicily. At that time the influence of the demagogues and particularly of Cleon was in the ascendant in Athens and the Athenians wished for a vigorous prosecution of the Peloponnesian War.

*Death of
Archidamus:
Spartan offer
of peace*

In the same year died Archidamus and the possibility of peace naturally showed itself. Sparta had no reasons to be satisfied with the results of their campaigns during the last two years and Athens appeared to be invincible. An earthquake hindered fresh invasion of Attica and Spartan ephors opened negotiations for peace. The terms offered were supposed to have been a return to the position as defined in the *Thirty Years' Peace*. This naturally would mean dispossession of the Athenian cleruchies and restoration of Aegina to its old inhabitants. But the offer did not find favour with the Athenian people due to the sanguinary attitude of the popular leaders.

*Offer of peace
rejected by
Athens*

*Operations in
426 B.C.*

The first series of operations in the year 426 B.C. was directed by the old generals. Athenian fleet was sent round the Peloponnesus to continue war in North-Western Greece. But the Dorian island of Melos could not be made to surrender. Nicias ravaged the coast of Eastern Locris.

*Attack on
Leucas*

In the North-West Demosthenes supported by Acarnians, Corcyraeans and other allies of Athens attacked the island of Leucas which was of great strategic importance. The Leucadians on being attacked cooped themselves up within the city. The Acarnians suggested to Demosthenes an immediate investment of the city. But to avoid the tedium of a protracted siege, Demosthenes accepted the suggestion of the Messanians that Aetolia should be subdued which would strengthen Naupactus and Athenian influence on the western mainland. Demosthenes also saw in it the possibility of opening up a new avenue for attack upon Boeotia. But Demosthenes made a gross miscalculation of the whole situation and relied on his

*Suggestion of
a siege of
Leucas not
accepted*

own strategic imagination in his anxiety to distinguish himself, for it was the last year of his term of office as a general. He gave up his campaign against Leucas and began the new campaign against Aetolia with insufficient preparation and without waiting for the contingents promised by Locris. In an unplanned attack on Aetolians in which the Athenian hoplites proved unavailing against Aetolian javelinmen, Demosthenes lost 120 out of his 300 hoplites and was forced to retire. For this failure Demosthenes was sure to be punished by the Athenian people and he did not dare return to Athens. The Aetolians appealed to the Corinthians and the Spartans for help who at once agreed to provide the needed help in the hope of taking advantage of the defeat of Demosthenes. 3,000 Peloponnesian hoplites began the offensive. Ozolian Locrians did not venture to offer any resistance. The Peloponnesian army now appeared before Naupactus. Demosthenes took this opportunity to retrieve his fortune. He raised an army of 1,000 hoplites from among the Acarnians and made a good defence of Naupactus. The Spartan commander Eurylochus who commanded the Peloponnesian army of hoplites moved on to Western Aetolia and encouraged the Ambraciotes to conquer Acarnia and Amphilochia. The Acarnians now placed their whole army under Demosthenes. He also got the 20 triremes with two generals who were sent to supersede him, to come to his assistance. The Messanians and 60 Athenian archers also joined him. In the battle that followed Demosthenes won a victory with a smaller force over Eurylochus who was killed in action. The Peloponnesians withdrew leaving the Ambraciotes and the barbarian mercenaries to the tender mercy of the Acarnians. The allies of the Peloponnesians were chased with heavy loss and the Ambraciote force was trapped and destroyed at Idomene.

*Demosthenes
accepts the
suggestion to
attack Aetolia:
His strategic
imagination*

*Demosthenes'
defeat at the
hands of the
Aetolians*

*Peloponnesian
hoplites come
to the assist-
ance of
Aetolia*

*Demosthenes'
service*

*Defeat of the
Peloponnesian
army*

*Ambraciotes
army destroyed*

Demosthenes now returned to Athens in triumph to be elected general for the next year. But the

*Demosthenes
returned to
Athens :
elected general
for the next
year*

Acarnians who could easily have destroyed Ambracia signed a treaty with her, both sides pledging not to take any offensive action against each other. Ambracia pledged not to help the Corinthian colony of Anactorium, which Acarnia occupied in the next year.

*Results of
Athenian
campaign in
the North-West*

The net results of the campaign in the north-western area were (i) the re-establishment of the personal reputation of Demosthenes, for his energy had more than atoned for his previous failure; (ii) the Athenian gain was less than what it would have been if Leucas had been occupied and the whole-hearted support of the Acarnians retained. The Acarnians had entered into a treaty with the Ambraciotes in their distrust for Athens; (iii) the most important result was the encouragement the success of Demosthenes had given to optimists in Athens. Athenian adventurism increased to an incredible limit and the optimists in Athens hoped for the impossible with Demosthenes to execute new and promising schemes. In vain did Aristophanes castigated the Athenian adventurers' wild schemes of making profits through war. The Athenians began the campaigning season of 425 B.C. with unwonted resoluteness.

*Peloponnesian
invasion of
Attica
(425 B.C.)*

*Support to
Corcyraean
exiles*

*Athenian
fleet
despatched to
Sicily*

9/Pylos and Sphacteria : During the summer of 425 B.C. the Peloponnesians and their allies under the command of Agis, son of Archidamus, who had in the mean time succeeded to the Spartan throne, invaded Attica. It was also planned to send a fleet of 60 triremes to assist the exiled oligarchs who were harrying the democrats in Corcyra. Athens had in the mean time despatched a fleet of forty ships under Eurymedon and Sophocles, to Sicily. Demosthenes who, after his victory over the Ambraciots returned to Athens in triumph was also sent with the expedition. He was with the expedition in a private capacity but was authorised to employ the fleet at his own discretion on the Peloponnesian coast. But as the Athenian fleet was proceeding round Laconia, news arrived that

Spartan fleet had reached Corcyra in support of the exiled oligarchs and that the Corcyraean democrats were in dire need of Athenian help. Demosthenes had definite plans of his own. His aim was to occupy Pylos. But the generals were not in favour of his plan. A storm, however, put an end to all controversy and drove the fleet to Pylos and compelled it to take refuge in the harbour of Pylos.

*Corcyraean
appeal for help*

*Demosthenes'
plan*

Demosthenes now suggested to the other generals that Pylos should be fortified. But failing to understand the exceptionally advantageous position of Pylos wherefrom immense damage could be inflicted on the Spartans, Eurymedon and Sophocles were scornful and retorted that there were many more such desolate headlands which Demosthenes might feel like occupying in his eagerness to squander public money. As the storm raged unabated and the soldiers grew tired of idling, the question of raising fortification naturally appealed to them. Seized by a sudden enthusiasm they began to raise fortification by fitting stone with stone. In six days they turned Pylos into the strongest of improvised fortresses. The position was well-chosen as Pylos was easily defensible and a garrison stationed there could easily keep touch with the fleets of Athens.

*Divided
opinion*

*Fortification
of Pylos*

As soon as the storm had abated, Eurymedon and Sophocles hastened on their way. Demosthenes was left behind with only five ships. The Spartan government recalled their army from Attica and ordered their fleet back from Corcyra. The Spartan fleet arrived near Pylos evading the main Athenian squadron, and a joint attack by land and sea was planned. It was the test of Demosthenes' skill and scheme. As he was preparing for defence two Messanian ships with some hoplites and arms joined him. The Messanians were the sworn enemies of Sparta. Despite the Messanian help that had arrived, Demosthenes' force was too small for facing any determined attack by the Peloponnesian troops and ships. With the Spartan forces was Brasidas who was a rival with equal skill, courage,

*Eurymedon
and Sophocles
start for
Sicily*

*Demosthenes
left behind
to defend
Pylos with
scanty force*

*Spartan
attempt at
landing*

enterprise and resource as of Demosthenes. Immediate peril by land and by sea threatened Demosthenes in Pylos. Eurymedon and Sophocles had withdrawn to Zacynthus. Demosthenes sent for the return of the two generals with the squadron under their command. But before any assistance arrived, the Peloponnesian fleet arrived Thrasymelidas and Brasidas in command. There was but one point where landing of the Spartan forces was possible lay at the south-west corner, north of the Sikia Channel. Demosthenes deployed his troops to guard the landward walls, himself with sixty men and few archers lined the shore where landing by the enemy might take place.

*Sparta throws
a garrison on
Sphacteria*

Before attacking Pylos, the Spartans took step by way of precaution and threw garrison into Sphacteria island. Sphacteria, modern Sphagia, lies athwart the Bay of Navarino. It is separated from Pylos to the north by a narrow channel, called the Sikia Channel only 132 yards broad at its narrowest place. It was uninhabited and pathless when in 425 B.C. the Spartan garrison occupied it. This was done with the object of preventing the Athenians from using it during the course of the struggle. The Spartans, as Thucydides observes, had the design of blocking up the entrance to the bay. But South of Sphacteria, the channel was too deep for anchorage and its width was 1,200 yards. But eventually the Spartans left the channels unblocked.

*Sikia Channel
left unblocked*

*Simultaneous
attack by
land and sea*

Admiral Thrasymelidas with his ships sailed out of the bay and approached Pylos from seaside and attempted to force a landing at a south-west point of the promontory. Simultaneously the land army attacked the crude wall from the landward side. Brasidas was with the sea attack and pressed it with his characteristic vigour but could not break the defence. He was wounded and his shield was won by the Athenians. The attack from the landside was also repulsed. Attack by land, though renewed, ended in failure. After second day's fight the Spartans moved

their ships into the Navarino Bay and their land-forces withdrew to their cantonment. The Spartans decided to build siege-engines to break the wall and sent for fetching timber for the purpose.

*Spartans
routed*

But Eurymedon and Sophocles arrived with their squadron on the third day and after resting for the night, attacked and took the Peloponnesian fleet in the bay by surprise on the next morning. A decisive victory was won by the Athenians which gave them the command of the sea and cut off the Spartan garrison on Sphacteria, which numbered 420 Spartans hoplites with their attendant *Helots*. The Athenian position on Pylos became secure for they could now defend the wall with the help of the fleet as well. Thus they became more of *besiegers than besieged*. Thucydides was struck by the humour of the situation and remarked that 'the Athenians were fighting a land-battle from the ships, the Lacedaemonians a sea-fight from the land.' The Spartans did not venture any further battle by sea and the Spartan hoplites on Sphacteria were beyond any chance of rescue. The Athenians had captured five Peloponnesian ships and were in complete possession of the bay. In deepest dismay the Spartan government hastened to the scene of the disaster. There was nothing better to be done than arrange for an armistice on the spot and to open negotiations for peace with Athens. The Athenian commanders granted a truce and envoys were sent to Athens with proposal for peace. The Spartan discomfiture can be well understood from the terms of the armistice. (i) The Peloponnesian fleet including all warships in Laconian waters were to be in the hands of the Athenians during the armistice. (ii) A fixed quantum of ration was to be supplied to the Spartans on Sphacteria. (iii) The Athenians were to have the right to patrol round the island of Sphacteria, but not to land on the island. Both sides to refrain from any hostility. (iv) All hostilities were to cease until the Spartan envoys returned from Athens. An Athenian

*Eurymedon
and Sophocles
won a signal
victory*

*Position
reversed*

*Offer of
armistice and
of peace*

*Terms of
Truce*

trireme was to take the Spartan envoys to Athens and to bring them back. (v) Least breach of the terms of armistice would mean the end of the truce.

*Athenian
terms for peace*

*Spartan
envoys could
not agree:
Return to
Pylos:
Truce came
to an end*

The Spartan envoys at Athens proposed not only peace but friendship and alliance between the two countries, i.e. Athens and Sparta. If these two powers agreed together, there would be no other Greek state which would be strong enough to cross them. The Athenians knew that Sparta would be prepared to make great sacrifice so long as it did not touch her and could be made at the expense of her allies in order to get the Spartan hoplites released from Sphacteria. The Athenians led by Cleon demanded the return of four places which Athens had surrendered at the Peace of 445 B.C. These were Nisaea, Pagae, Troezen and Achaëa. It was also demanded that the Spartans should begin by surrendering the hoplites on the island of Sphacteria to the Athenians, to be held as pledges for the fulfilment of further demands. Moreover, the Athenians demanded that negotiations should be conducted openly, an impossible demand indeed, for Sparta could not surrender her allies' possessions openly. The peace negotiations naturally broke down, for whatever sacrifice Sparta was willing to make it was impossible for her to agree to all the unreasonable Athenian demands. It was obvious that while the Spartans were honestly eager to conclude peace at once, Cleon, the Athenian leader did not want immediate peace. The Spartan envoys returned to Pylos without accomplishing anything and the truce there at once came to an end.

*Athens
captures a
great part
of the
Peloponnesian
navy without
a blow*

On the return of the envoys, the Spartan commanders demanded the return of their 60 ships which were placed at the hands of the Athenians according to the terms of the truce. But the Athenians refused to hand them over. This must have been done under instruction from Cleon. Thus a great part of the Peloponnesian navy was captured by the Athenians without a blow. The Athenians did so on the pretext

of some frivolous charge of petty attack on their fort at Pylos by the Peloponnesians. The Spartans protested, but in vain. They lost their ships and Athens, for a dozen years was rid of any apprehension of any interference with her naval activities.

The blockade of Sphacteria by the Athenians went on, but the garrison showed no sign of surrender. Food was arriving in small but sufficient quantities evading the blockade. Once the autumn gales would set in the blockade, already a difficult one, would become impossible, and autumn was drawing on apace. Athenian anxiety knew no bounds and it was feared that the prize was about to slip through their fingers.

*Blockade of
Sphacteria
continued
with
uncertain
future*

The situation led Nicias, the General-in-Chief at Athens, to one deduction that it was unfortunate for Athens not to agree to the conclusion of peace at the suggestion by Cleon. Cleon's political career was naturally at stake in the circumstances and he refused to believe that nothing could be done and pleaded for sending of reinforcement. On Nicias' retort in that case, Cleon himself should lead the reinforcement himself. Cleon's views were shared by Demosthenes. He, therefore, accepted the commission and promised to capture or kill the Spartans on Sphacteria within twenty days. On his arrival to Pylos with troops and 400 archers an ultimatum was sent to the Spartans on the island to surrender. On their refusal to do so, 800 Athenian hoplites landed and helped the disembarkation of some 8,000 men from the Athenian fleet.

*Cleon takes
command*

*Landing on
Sphacteria*

The Spartans fought with courage and determination worthy of their reputation. But although they fought stubbornly, as hours passed, wounds and weariness, thirst and heat of the blazing sun drained away their strength. The confidence of the Athenians grew naturally. At last the defence broke down, Epitadas the Spartan commander, had fallen and his lieutenant was wounded. The Spartans on Sphacteria surrendered

*Spartans on
the island of
Sphacteria
surrender*

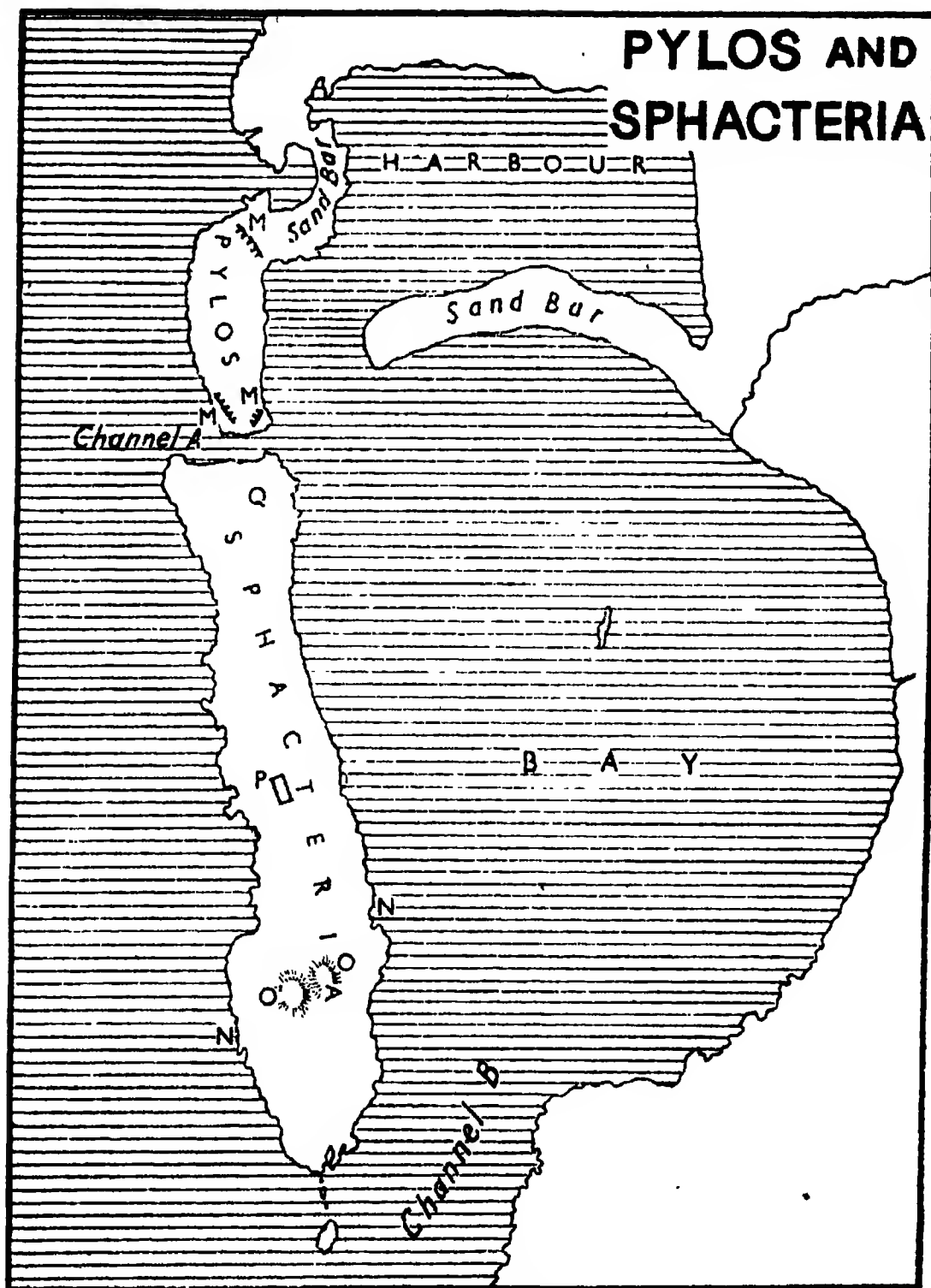
'after having done all that brave men could do'. Of the 420 Spartan hoplites 128 had fallen, of the rest who surrendered, 120 were Spartans. The Spartan land army retired and Cleon returned to Athens in triumph having redeemed his promise which at the time when it was made was regarded as a 'mad promise'. Thucydides remarks that 'Nothing which happened in the whole war caused greater amazement, for it was universally believed that Spartans would never surrender.'

*Strategically
important
and defensible
place*

*Strategic
position*

10/Strategical and Political significance of the Capture of Pylos and Sphacteria : Pylos or Coryphasium as the Spartans called it, lies on the west of the Peloponnesus and joined to the mainland on the north by a neck of sand, and on three sides encompassed by water. The north corner of the bay, now a marshy lagoon, was sheltered, and afforded harbourage for ship. There were, in those days, two entrances into the bay: one the narrow water which divides Pylos from Sphacteria, the other the wide passage which severs the southern point of Sphacteria from the mainland. The length of Pylos is less than a mile. On the seaside landing on Pylos was impossible, the harbour side was strongly protected by steep cliffs. If walls were built in three places, Pylos would be secure from external attack. (*See map.*) The peninsula of Pylos was defensible and a garrison could keep in touch with the fleets of Athens. It was a promontory which could be easily fortified, and close by there was a harbour, now called the Bay of Navarino, completely protected, by the island Sphacteria which lay opposite. From the naval side the position was that Pylos and the island of Sphacteria to the south guarded the Bay of Navarino.

Once Pylos was occupied, the Athenians would not be required to defend it. For it was reputed to be the original home of Nestor which would make it attractive to the Messanians and Helots who were sworn



M = *Demosthenes' walls on Pylos*

N = *Athenian landing places*

O = *West and East Table Hill—Spartan Outpost*

P = *Main Spartan camp (under high cliff hill)*

Q = *Old fort: Last Spartan position*

[facing page 222]

enemies of the Spartans. The Messanians were too ready to raid the fields of their old masters, the Spartans, and Pylos was the place wherefrom immense damage might be inflicted on the Spartans. The distance of Sparta from Pylos being forty-five miles, raids on Spartan fields could be easily made from Pylos and Sphacteria. 'The Messanians, the old natives of the country, speaking the same dialect as the Lacedaemonians, could do them the greatest mischief by their incursions from it, would at the same time be a trusty garrison.

*Messanians
being
inimically*

*the Spartans
would be
good defenders
of Pylos and
Sphacteria*

Pylos and Sphacteria would afford excellent asylum for the runaway slaves—the Helots—from Peloponnesus. This naturally, made the Helots who yet remained in Peloponnesus, look at those at Pylos and Sphacteria for moral support and willing to rebel. This placed the Lacedaemonians in an uneasy situation and their long accustomed security was now at stake.

*Asylum for
runaway
Helots*

Political significance of the occupation of Pylos and Sphacteria was great both internally and externally. Cleon returned in insolent triumph redeeming his promise in a brilliant fashion. Pylos and Sphacteria proved that Cleon's was no *mad promise*. He brought back the captives within twenty days. 'The success was of political rather than military importance'. This was the most important success gained in the war and the stroke of good luck increased the influence of Cleon placing the reputation of Nicias at stake. Nicias had to do something spectacular to maintain his position and reputation. Following the strategy of Cleon he attained partial success in Solygea, took Methone and Cythera. Loss of Cythera was more serious for Sparta than loss of Pylos. Athens now had three bases of operation in Peloponnesus itself, namely Pylos, Methone and Cythera.

*Triumph of
Cleon and his
strategy*

Capture of 292 prisoners of war at Sphacteria 120 of whom were Spartans created a great stir in Athens.

*Cessation of
the annual
invasion of
Attica*

Jubilation at the abject surrender apart, the Spartan prisoners who unlike the Spartan tradition, did not fight unto death but surrendered, were now hostages at the hands of the Athenians. The immediate effect of which was the cessation of the annual invasion of Attica by the Peloponnesians. For any such course would lead to reprisal in the shape of the massacre of the Spartan hostages.

*Loss of
Spartan
position in the
eyes of the
Hellenese*

Capture of Pylos and Sphacteria and of the Spartan prisoners had lowered the position of Sparta in peoples' estimation. 'Nothing that happened' remarks Thucydides in the war surprised the Hellenese so much as this. It was the opinion that no force or famine could make the Lacedaemonians give up their arms, but that they would fight on as they could and die with arms in their hands. The accepted notion of Spartan bravery since the days of Thermopylae was shaken. Not only this, the Spartan prisoners in the Athenian hands made the Spartans eager for peace and they made repeated overtures. Athens naturally had a great advantage over her enemy and was for the first time during the course of the war an upper hand over her enemy, as the terms of the *Truce* would show.

*Athens got
upper hand
over her
enemy*

*Acquisition
of the
Peloponnesian
navy:
Athens rid of
apprehension
of naval
interference
by Sparta*

The most important term of Truce between the Athenians and the Spartans at Pylos was the temporary surrender of the Spartan triremes 60 in number, in the Laconian waters to the Athenians for the period of the armistice. But as negotiations failed, and the Spartan envoys returned from Athens disappointed, the Spartans demanded the return of their ships. But the Athenians refused to hand them over on some frivolous charge of petty attacks on their fort at Pylos by the Peloponnesians. This loss of ships rendered Athens rid of any apprehension of any interference with their naval activities, by Sparta, for at least a dozen years to follow.

Triumph of Cleon at Pylos and Sphacteria made him the man of the hour and from the moment of his

return to Athens he dominated the Athenian policy for more than a year. He was naturally so strong that he doubled the tributes of the allies. The prestige of Athens stood so high that there was no revolt for such enhancement of tributes. Thus the affairs of Pylos and Sphacteria had their repercussions on the Athenian imperial policy and that without any demur by the allies.

*Effects on the
Athenian
imperial
policy*

The Messenians at Pylos raided the country-side of Lacedaemon, and the security that the Lacedaemonians enjoyed so long was shaken. Further, there was a widespread apprehension of Helot revolt for Pylos had become a good refuge for the Helots who would choose to desert their masters' estates. Repeated embassies were sent to Athens for regaining Pylos and their prisoners, but every time these came back empty-handed. The Athenians were in no mood for peace and it appeared that they would not stop short of a complete surrender of the enemy. The victory at Pylos and Sphacteria was, in fact, the first great step in the way of the signing of the Peace of Nicias. It had shaken the Spartan confidence. But desperation sometimes leads to the rise of saviours. Brasidas was the genius induced by the Spartan humiliation at the Athenian hands. The Thracian campaign by Brasidas, fall of Delium and Amphipolis had done for Athens what Pylos and Sphacteria had done for Sparta. Athenian confidence was no shaken and her former attitude of no peace with Sparta began to thaw and Peace of Nicias was one more step nearer.

*Apprehension
of Helot
revolt*

*Spartan peace
overtures*

*Athens'
hardened
attitude*

*Rise of
Brasidas*

*Loss of
Delium and
Amphipolis
broke
Athenian
confidence:
Peace of
Nicias nearer*

11/**Cleon** : Post-Periclean period in Athens was characterised by the rise of a new class of statesmen. The calm sense of Pericles was no longer there to guide or enlighten the Athenian Assembly, instead democratic statesmen of an altogether different stamp came to take his place. Men of the people—like Cleon, the leather merchant, Eucrates, the rope-seller, Hyperbolus, the lamp-maker now swayed the Athenian Assembly. Like Aristides, Cimon and Pericles they had neither

*Rise of new
statesmen*

the family background nor the family support or even the aristocratic background of their democratic policy. The new statesmen were self-made and won their influence in the state by sheer force of cleverness, eloquence and audacity. Cleon and other statesmen of this new type are especially interesting 'as the politicians whom the advanced democracy produced and educated.'

Rise of Cleon

It was in 427 B.C. that Cleon first came prominently upon the scene of Athenian politics and held sway for nearly six years to follow. 'He had snatched the leadership of the Assembly almost from the grasp of dying Pericles.' 'Few statesmen of the merit of Cleon' remarks Prof. Bury, 'have come before posterity for judgment at such a great disadvantage, condemned by Thucydides held up to eternal ridicule by Aristophanes'. The new leader was the favourite butt of attack by the Athenian comedians, specially of Aristophanes. The other comic dramatists as well—such as Eupolis, Hermippus, Plato the poet, etc., lashed out at Cleon fiercely. In comedy after comedy Aristophanes poured virulent abuse on Cleon's head. The comedies, the *Acharnians*, the *Knights*, the *Clouds*, the *Wasps* and the *Peace* showed little mercy to Cleon. The statesman has been depicted as the villain of the *Knights*. Thucydides had positive dislike for Cleon. He charges Cleon of cowardice, violence and calls him the greatest enemy of peace. There were personal grounds for such attack on Cleon, both by the historian and the comedian. Thucydides was prosecuted by Cleon on the ground of military failure in 424 B.C. and was banished for twenty years. Aristophanes had to face open denunciation in the Assembly for his depicting the subject allies of Athens as slaves working in the State mill of the tyrant task master. He was, however, let off after public denunciation. Henderson refers to the criticism by a Cambridge writer who remarks that 'if there is a moral cloud which hangs over Thucydides' treatment of Cleon, it is shot through with lurid

*Character of
Cleon—
according to
Thucydides
and Aristophanes*

*Thucydides'
and
Aristophanes'
judgment
clouded by
personal*

lightnings.' Cleon has been described by Thucydides as a dishonest politician, a wrongful accuser of others, the most violent of all the citizens. Both in the prose of Thucydides and the verse of Aristophanes same charges have been set forth against Cleon. Aristophanes, as Prof. Grote points out, went one better and with his characteristic emphasis charged Cleon of practising the 'basest artifices and deception to gain favour with the people, steals public money, receives bribes, extorts compositions from private persons wholesale, and thus enriches himself under pretence of zeal for the public treasury.'

*Thucydides
and
Aristophanes'
charge
against Cleon*

Now, to take a dispassionate view of the charges made against Cleon by Thucydides and Aristophanes, it is necessary to remember that while personal pique was responsible for 'Thucydides' acrimony against Cleon, the Aristophanes' character portrayal did not actually touch Cleon's position or popularity. 'The calm and lofty Thucydides' who was reputed to be the most impartial as a historian only succumbed to human nature while writing about his enemy Cleon who caused his exile for twenty years. Thucydides had forgotten his usual impartiality in criticising Cleon, his personal enemy.

*Evaluation of
the characteri-
sation of
Cleon by
Thucydides*

Aristophanes' choice of subject, method of treatment, broad jest and humour, and language prove only the taste of the people of the time as also their amazing good nature and tolerance. 'At these violent epithets, at this flood of abuse, hurled at their most popular statesman year after year, the people held their sides and roared with laughter. The poet won prize after prize. The statesman (Cleon) sate in a front seat and listened and laughed among the loudest.' Professor Grote nicely points out that 'No man thinks of judging Sir Robert Walpole, or Mr. Fox, or Mirabeau, from the numerous lampoons put in circulation against them. No man will take a measure of a political Englishman from *Punch* or of a Frenchman from *Charivari*.' The remarks of Aristophanes

*Evaluation of
the characteri-
sation of
Cleon by
Aristophanes*

Not of historical value

cannot likewise be a real measure of the Athenian leader Cleon. The fact that Cleon never lost a vote after any of Aristophanes' productions proves the point raised by Grote. Aristophanes' picture of Cleon was a travesty and a caricature, after all, as Henderson points out 'Ancient Attic comedy does not set up to be a Historical Portrait Gallery'. Nothing is proved against Cleon's political insight or his political honesty. Aristophanes' comedies carry no more value than nowadays a caricature in a comic paper.

His character

All the same, as Henderson observes, Cleon was 'stormy, violent, self-confident, self-assertive'. 'Venal he certainly was. Entering public life a poor man he left upon his death a fortune certainly of 50, possibly of 100 talents.' 'Cleon was a man of brains and resolution' and was certainly of much above the average abilities. Before his rise to political predominance his main activity had been the law courts where he called to question the officers' activities and maintained safeguards of popular government. Cleon was the watch-dog of the Athenian people. He had mastered the details of political affairs and must have had studied the art of speaking and had been able to hold his audience. He had also the courage to confront the Olympian authority of Pericles. He was a clever statesman and a powerful demagogue, but evidently no general. But at his time, it was necessary for the leader of the people to be able to take the command of the army.

A great opposition leader

Professor Grote likens Cleon to an opposition leader—a man of violent temper, fierce political antipathies—a bitter speaker. 'These are the qualities' remarks Grote, 'in all countries of free debate, go to form what is called a great opposition leader.' Like Cato the Censor at Rome, he had a powerful talent at invectives, acrimony of temper, and a native aptitude for accusation of all high or low. In what proportion his accusations were just or calumnious cannot be determined,

A great accuser

as it is not possible in the case of Cato or any other leader of the opposition.

Cleon was introduced to our notice by Thucydides on the occasion of Mitylenaeen surrender. The new politicians that arose in Athens after Pericles were mostly strong imperialists and 'Cleon seems to have taken fully to heart the maxim of Pericles, to keep the subject allies *well in hand*.' His policy was quite openly that of government of the subject allies of the Empire by terrorism. 'Democracy cannot govern an Empire' he angrily shouted to his fellow citizens and his words since then have become famous. 'Democracy is too humanitarian, too sentimental.' He expressed his relentless harshness on the question of punishing the Mitylenaeen rebels and this was ample proof of his willingness to ensure the continuance of the empire. He demanded that instead of reversing the sentence of slaughter of all the male Mitylenaeen of man's age and of enslavement of every woman and child in the place, Mitylene must be made an example to the empire. 'Punish them as they deserve, and teach your other allies by a striking example that the penalty of rebellion is death.' 'For if they are right in rebelling, you must be wrong in ruling. However, right or wrong you determine to rule, you must carry out your principle.' The Assembly, however, reversed its earlier decision and Cleon had a rebuff. But if the imperial policy of Pericles would be justifiable, Cleon's advocacy of strong action stood justified.

*Cleon's
foreign policy*

*His
imperialism*

*Cleon's plea
for punish-
ment of the
Mitylenaeen
rebels*

In the affairs of Pylos and Sphacteria although the distinction of showing the best specimen of generalship belonged to Demosthenes, yet Cleon was the main and indispensable cause of procuring for his country the greatest advantage obtained throughout the war.

*Acquisition of
Pylos and
Sphacteria*

Cleon was a born financier. The new schemes for active operation of war would require money but the treasury was almost empty. Cleon would not lower wages or effect economy at home to pay for the war.

*A born
financier*

*Spirit of fire
and energy*

To keep pace with the increased cost of living he raised the jurors' fee from two to three *obols*. He revised the tribute payments demanded of every subject ally and received in 425 B.C. a revenue from tributes almost double the amount of previous years. 'So he breathed his own spirit of fire and energy for a year or two into Athenian operations of war.' 'This is Cleon's importance in the history of the war. To him war was war. It is his supreme merit as War Minister that he set out to hit the enemy hard and often.' His advice to wage war in Thrace although condemned by the peace party, was just and judicious, right and truly Periclean—much surpassing that of his opponents. With Cleon it was no more defensive passivity, no more offensive pin-pricks, no more half-hearted feeble advocacy of peace or negotiation with the enemy.'

*Thucydides'
charges
against Cleon
examined*

Thucydides has not spared Cleon for his foreign policy. To him Cleon was a relentless enemy of peace, for he desired war because he could not so easily conceal his own dishonesty in peace. His policy was determined by selfish ambition or party malice. 'Of all the enemies of peace, he is most brutal, the most deadly.' Thucydides' charge does not carry conviction. After all Cleon was no military commander himself and he could not have any personal interest in prosecuting war for such a course would make him depend on a commander other than himself as actually he had done at Sphacteria. The victory there was largely due to Demosthenes' contribution as a general. It was Nicias, the leader of the peace party, that had thrust on him the command at Sphacteria in the hope of getting rid of him. Even when after one year's truce had expired, Cleon was able to carry a resolution that an expedition should be sent to reconquer Amphipolis, it is doubtful whether he was anxious for the command. It was perhaps the opposition and lukewarmness of the peace party that forced him into it. Equally unconvincing is the contention of Thucydides that Cleon's war policy was determined by personal

ambition or party malice. Fact shows that the Demagogues to whom Cleon belonged were for avoiding war as this would give rise to military commanders dangerous to democratic constitution. The Syracusan affair proves it beyond doubt. What Cleon did was to follow Periclean imperial tradition and his policy has no lesser justification than that of Pericles himself. His vigorous and relentless policy was essentially determined by his eagerness to maintain the continuance of the empire.

*Follower of
Periclean
imperial
policy*

12/New offensive: The capture of Pylos forced Spartans to discontinue their annual invasion of Attica, for Athens held the Spartan hostages. The elation of success induced the Athenians to undertake fresh offensive. In 424 B.C., Demosthenes together with Demodocus Autocles, Aristides as also Eucles and Thucydides the historian were elected generals. The post of the General-in-Chief passed to Hippocrates. They were to enter office in July, 424 B.C. But before they had entered office Nicias in order to maintain his reputation which was at stake, led an expedition and captured Methone and Cythera; the loss of the latter was more serious for Sparta than the loss of Pylos.

*New generals
elected*

With the entry of the new generals to office the Athenian strategy took a wider range. The Spartans had been forced into inactivity due to the fear of the lives of the captured Spartans and for their coasts. The Athenians seized the opportunity of capturing Megara and then to master Boeotia. The Megarians worn out by constant invasions and with their harbour, Pegae in the hands of the exiles and their more important harbour Nisaea blockaded by the Athenians made secret peace overtures to Hippocrates and Demosthenes—the Athenian generals. The Peloponnesian garrison which held Nisaea ultimately surrendered. The city which was still held by the Peloponnesians was about to surrender. 'At this point fortune intervened through her chosen instrument

*Athens seized
the opportu-
nity to
capture
Megara and
master
Boeotia*

*Brasidas'
offensive*

*Hippocrates
and
Demosthenes
avoid direct
confrontation:
Retire to
Athens*

*Plan for
three-pronged
attack on
Boeotia*

*Plan
betrayed*

Brasidas' who happened to be in the neighbourhood preparing for an expedition against Thrace. Brasidas realised the danger of Megara and put himself in touch with the Boeotians who had already understood the ulterior significance of Athenian seizure of Nisaea. Brasidas raised contingents from Corinth, Sicyon and Phlius and without waiting for the Boeotians pushed on to Megara. Dissension among the Megarans caused their refusal to admit Brasidas and waited to see which of the Athenians and Spartans were victorious. Boeotian contingent of 2,200 hoplites and 600 cavalry joined Brasidas who with a total number of 6,000 hoplites had after a cavalry skirmish took up position covering the city of Megara and waited for the Athenian attack. The Athenian generals Hippocrates and Demosthenes did not risk battle with comparatively small force and leaving a garrison in Nisaea left for home. Brasidas now reinstated the oligarchs in power in Megara putting to death a hundred of the democrats who were implicated in the plot with Athens. Thus the Athenian scheme succeeded only partially and they only secured Nisaea and a part of the Megarian Long Walls. The recovery of Nisaea which Athens had lost by the *Thirty Years' Peace* was a solid gain. But this did not discourage them. They put the second part of the scheme—the attack on Boeotia into effect. Here also the Athenians had hopes of support from within. Immediately after the return from Megara Hippocrates and Demosthenes arrived at Naupactus. Hippocrates began secret intrigue with some people in the Boeotian cities who wished to change their constitution and introduce a democracy as at Athens. The plan was to attack Boeotia on three sides. But the plan was betrayed. None of the internal movements in Boeotian cities as the Athenians had counted, took place. Hippocrates, however, succeeded in reaching and fortifying Delium. Having secured Delium as the Athenian army was making for home, it was set upon by the enemies. The extreme right wing of the Athenian array of soldiers was victorious although the

extreme left wing could not be sustained. But with the appearance of fresh reinforcement of a squadron of cavalry, the Athenians fled. Hippocrates was slain and his troops completely dispersed. 'The Battle of Delium confirmed the verdict of Coronea.' Delium itself was still held by the Athenian garrison. In the negotiation that followed, the Boeotians contrary to age-long custom of allowing the vanquished to collect their dead soldiers unconditionally, refused to agree to the recovery of dead bodies by the Athenians unless Delium was vacated by the Athenian troops. Negotiation having failed the Boeotians besieged Delium and by a clever device set fire to the rampart making it impossible for the Athenian garrison to remain there. They made good their escape. The Battle of Delium left about 1,000 hoplites dead. 'The Battle of Delium eclipsed the prestige of Athens, but did not seriously impair her strength, yet a much greater blow was in store for Athens in the same year in Thrace.'

*Battle of
Delium*

*Athenian
defeat*

*Eclipse of
Athenian
prestige*

13/Thracian campaign : Sitalces, king of Thrace, was in friendly alliance with Athens, so much so that he made his son Sadocus an Athenian citizen. His kingdom was both rich and extensive. Perdiccas, king of Macedon, was a shifty character, at times siding with Athens at others helping enemies of Athens and played a double role between Athens and Sparta.

Athenian occupation of Pylos made Perdiccas and the Chalcidians of Olynthus fearful of the possible interference of Athens in Thrace. They sent an embassy to Sparta appealing for help against anticipated Athenian attack. No Spartans were sent but 700 Helots armed and dressed like Spartan hoplites and some funds were placed at the disposal of Brasidas who hired 1,000 hoplites from Peloponnesus. Having organised and drilled this small force Brasidas made his way through Thessaly where the mass of the people were pro-Athenian, and reached Acanthus where he made the city abandon Athenian alliance, with the

*Brasidas
with a small
force reaches
Acanthus and
wins it over*

*Stagira and
Argilus
follow suit*

*Capture of
Amphipolis*

*Banishment
of Thucydides*

help of the anti-Athenian oligarchs.. Stagira and Argilus—two other colonies followed Acanthus. Winning over of Argilus facilitated Brasidas' capture of the most important of all cities of the Athenian empire, Amphipolis. This was possible because of the negligence of both Eucles and Thucydides, for which Thucydides was banished. We, however, do not hear of Eucles any more. Brasidas then reduced Acte and captured Torone.

*Athenians
disheartened*

The Athenians had, after the Battle of Delium, become very much disheartened. The disaster at Delium left the Athenian citizens unwilling to pursue war in Thrace. It is worthwhile to remember that in Greece in those days the army was citizen army and not professional soldiers retained as standing army. The result was that peoples' mood—either of fear or despondency altered the military calculations. Military need or political prudence would not then play any part. Much depended on the power of speech of the leader of the people. In Athens people became disheartened and particularly Nicias and Laches who represented peace party in Athens took advantage of this general depression to work in the direction of peace. Only the able guidance of a leader of the type of Pericles could have restored Athenian spirit. Cleon, although far abler politician than his opponents could not influence the decision of the Assembly despite serious attempts. The people were definitely inclined to peace.

*Athenians
inclined to
peace*

*Spartans like-
wise inclined
to peace for
different
reasons*

Curiously enough, the Spartans were even more inclined to peace because of their anxiety to recover the Sphacterian captives and their jealousy and distrust of Brasidas. The victories won by Brasidas, were not received with unmixed feelings in Sparta. King Pleistoanax had also thrown his weight in favour of peace.

Nicias and Pleistoanax agreed to a truce for a year which would give them time to decide upon the exact

terms of an enduring peace. The clauses of the One Year's Truce (423 B.C.) were: Athenians who had been debarred from consulting the *Delphic Oracle* were now allowed free access to the temple of Delphi. Both parties guaranteed the protection of the treasures of Delphi. The Athenians were to retain what they had, but were not to receive deserters or fugitive slaves. The Lacedaemonians were not to sail, even along their own coasts in war ships or even in merchant ships exceeding a stipulated size. Envoys of both sides were to be allowed free passage, for the purposes of arranging the peace. All disputes as may arise were to be decided by arbitration. It was hoped by the Spartans that they would be able to negotiate the Athenians out of Pylos and Cythera and their prisoners out of Athens and the latter hoped to negotiate Brasidas out of the region towards Thrace.

*One Year's
Truce:
Its terms*

*Hopes of the
parties*

Two days after the ratification of the armistice Scione, the second largest city in Pallene, declared for Brasidas who at once threw a garrison there. Thus having obtained a good footing planned to attack Mende and Potidaea when the Athenian and Spartan Commissioners arrived with the news of the armistice. Everything was arranged according to the terms of the armistice except for the city of Scione. The Athenian Commissioner demanded withdrawal of Brasidas from Scione, but Brasidas contrary to truth asserted that the city had revolted before the armistice was ratified. The Spartans proposed arbitration according to the terms of the armistice. The Athenians on Cleon's proposal decided to take the city by force and punish the renegade citizens. Brasidas with the help of Perdiccas decided to face the Athenian expedition. But with Potidaea under Athenian control the whole peninsula could be starved to submission. The result of the expedition was the retreat of Perdiccas and Brasidas. Misunderstanding having developed between the troops of Perdiccas and Brasidas, the former, once again made peace with Athens. In the mean time Nicias and

*Dispute over
Scione*

*Hostilities
over Scione
and Mende*

Nicostratus with 50 triremes and 1,000 hoplites landed in Pellene, took Mende where the oligarchical minority contrived to bring about secession of the city and laid siege of the city of Scione. Every where else the armistice was observed. 'The Greeks had a notable capacity for simultaneous peace and war' is the jibe of Prof. Adcock (Cam. Hist.).

*Battle of
Amphipolis
(422-21 B.C.)*

The negotiations for peace could not proceed exactly in the way that both parties had expected. At the end of the year Athens under Cleon's influence was again roused to a spirit of military conquests. He planned punishment of Scione, restoration of Athenian power throughout Sethonia and Acte and recovery of Amphipolis. At the end of *One Year's Truce* the armistice was not renewed. Brasidas, Cleon's Spartan counterpart was equally opposed to peace. In the Battle of Amphipolis Cleon was killed with 600 Athenians. Brasidas also fell at the moment of triumph.

*Death of both
Cleon and
Brasidas*

*Death of
Cleon and
Brasidas
paved the way
for peace:*

*The war did
not follow the
course expected
either by
Athens or by
Sparta*

*Reasons for
Spartans'
willingness
for peace*

14/Peace of Nicias, 421 B.C. The death of Cleon and Brasidas removed two most determined opponents to peace. While the death of Cleon had given a free hand to Nicias and the peace party in Athens, that of Brasidas removed the last obstacle from the path of the peace party at Sparta. The desire for peace now became stronger on both sides. Both Athens and Sparta found that the war was not taking the course that they had fondly hoped and expected.

The reasons that impelled the Spartans to look eagerly for peace were: *First*, they found that the series of invasions of Attica had proved futile. *Secondly*, their own country, in fact, the whole of Peloponnesus was being threatened and devastated by the Athenians from Pylos and Cythera. *Thirdly*, 'the war had been begun for the sake of Corinth, they themselves had reaped no advantage from it'. *Fourthly*, the *Thirty Years' Truce* signed between Argos and Sparta would come to an end in the following year, and should Argos join Athens against Sparta, the situation was sure to

take a dangerous turn. *Fifthly*, the fear of a Helot revolt was very real and the almost daily desertion of Helots and the fast diminishing fidelity of those who were yet in Sparta made the Spartan government suspicious of the Helots. A peace would offer them opportunity to deal with the Helots effectively. *Sixthly*, the Spartan anxiety for the repatriation of the Spartan prisoners taken to Athens from Sphacteria also explain Spartan willingness for peace. *Seventhly*, the Spartan King Pleistoanax who had been earlier exiled from Sparta but later on recalled, was eager to have peace so that he might rehabilitate himself in the esteem of the Spartans, for peace would be more favourable for such a restoration than war. *Lastly*, as it has already been mentioned that Brasidas who was opposed to peace, had left the situation favourable for peace by his death.

Athens was also equally eager for peace, although her reasons were different. *First*, with the death of Cleon who headed war party in Athens, the influence of Nicias and the peace party was in the ascendant. *Secondly*, Athenian defeat at Delium and Amphipolis had rudely shaken the confidence of the Athenians and they became despaired of the ultimate success as the course of the war did not go in the way that they had expected. *Thirdly*, the policy of aggression and war that the radical democrats in Athens were in favour of following, stood discredited with the death of Cleon, their leader. This made peace easier. *Fourthly*, the protracted war, already fought for ten years had not only brought weariness and exhaustion but also terrible loss in money and man power. The natural reaction of the Athenians, at least a large number of them was in favour of ending war. *Fifthly*, the secession of cities from Athenian empire became a real threat to the empire and it was felt that restoration of peace would arrest this tendency towards secession. *Lastly*, the death of Brasidas removed the most-effective enemy of Athens in Chalcidice and Athens felt that time was opportune for peace.

*Reasons for
'Athenian
willingness
for peace*

*Nicias and
Pleistoanax
architects of
peace*

If in Athens, Nicias the man of peace was in the ascendant, Pleistoanax, the Spartan King was gaining in influence. The chief authors of the peace were Nicias and Pleistoanax. It goes by the name of Nicias, and was fixed for a term of fifty years. The document embodying the terms of the peace, was the product of six months of cautious bargaining after ten years' ruinous war. The details of the peace have been preserved for us by Thucydides in the very phrases of the document itself.

*Clauses of the
Peace of
Nicias
(421 B.C.)*

The clauses were: (i) The common temples of Greece were to be free to all, and the autonomy of the Delphians and their temple was ensured. (ii) The peace between the Athenians and Spartans and their respective allies, was to endure for a period of fifty years, 'without fraud or hurt by land or by sea'. (iii) It was to be illegal for Athens and her allies to take up arms with intent to do harm to Lacedaemon and her allies and *vice versa*. Should there be any dispute between the parties it was to be settled by legal means and through arbitration. (iv) There was to be a mutual restoration of cities or territories occupied during belligerency. Inhabitants of any city as may be handed over to the Athenians were to be allowed to take their property with them. But this clause was difficult of application since cities, viz. Olynthus and Spartolus had seceded from the Athenian alliance even before the war. Amphipolis was handed back to Athens and Athens was allowed a free-hand with the remaining cities in that area. For these considerations Athens acquiesced in a compromise as regards Argilus, Stagirus, Acanthus, Stolis, Olynthus, and Spartolus which were not to be allies either of Athens or Sparta. But they might, of their free choice join the Athenian alliance any time. Athens was not to take any hostile action against any of these cities so long as they paid the tribute as assessed by Aristides. Thus these cities occupied a special position with no other obligation to render to Athens nor to ask from

Sparta any assistance as allies. (v) The Athenians were to give back Coryphasium or Pylos, Cythera, Methone, Pteleum and Atalanta to Sparta and free all Spartan prisoners in Athens or any other place within the Athenian dominion. (vi) The Lacedaemonians and their allies were to free all Athenian prisoners as might be in their hands. (vii) Express provision was made for the recognition of the independence of Mectomy, Sane and Singus. (viii) The Athenians and their allies, Lacedaemonians and their allies city by city must produce seventeen citizens who would take the oath: *I will abide by this agreement and treaty honestly and without deceit.* (ix) Within her empire as also in case of Torone, Sermylum and Scione Athens might adopt such measures as she would like. (x) If anything was forgotten parties to the peace might use their discretion consistent with their oath.

If the war was meant for an assault on the Athenian empire, the Peace of Nicias had acknowledged its failure. For within a decade Athens would replenish her depleted treasury. Her linked fortresses and the navy went unchallenged. Only places that Athens had lost during the war were Amphipolis and Panactum, but the Peace of Nicias restored these to Athens.

*Failure of the
purpose of the
war:
Complications*

The peace only met the Athenian and Lacedaemonian interests. Corinth had lost all her allies and her dependencies in North-West Greece, but there was not a word for their restoration in the terms of the peace. This was a clear betrayal of Corinthian interest by Sparta. After ten years war and strain Corinth was asked to accept without compensation a peace which confirmed Athens in the possession of all the object of disputes. With Athens, therefore, Corinth only suspended hostilities but did not agree to make even a truce. Elis, however, had her private reasons not to accept the peace, as she was in a bitter quarrel with Sparta.

*Corinthian
interests
betrayed by
Sparta*

Insofar as Megara was concerned, her chief

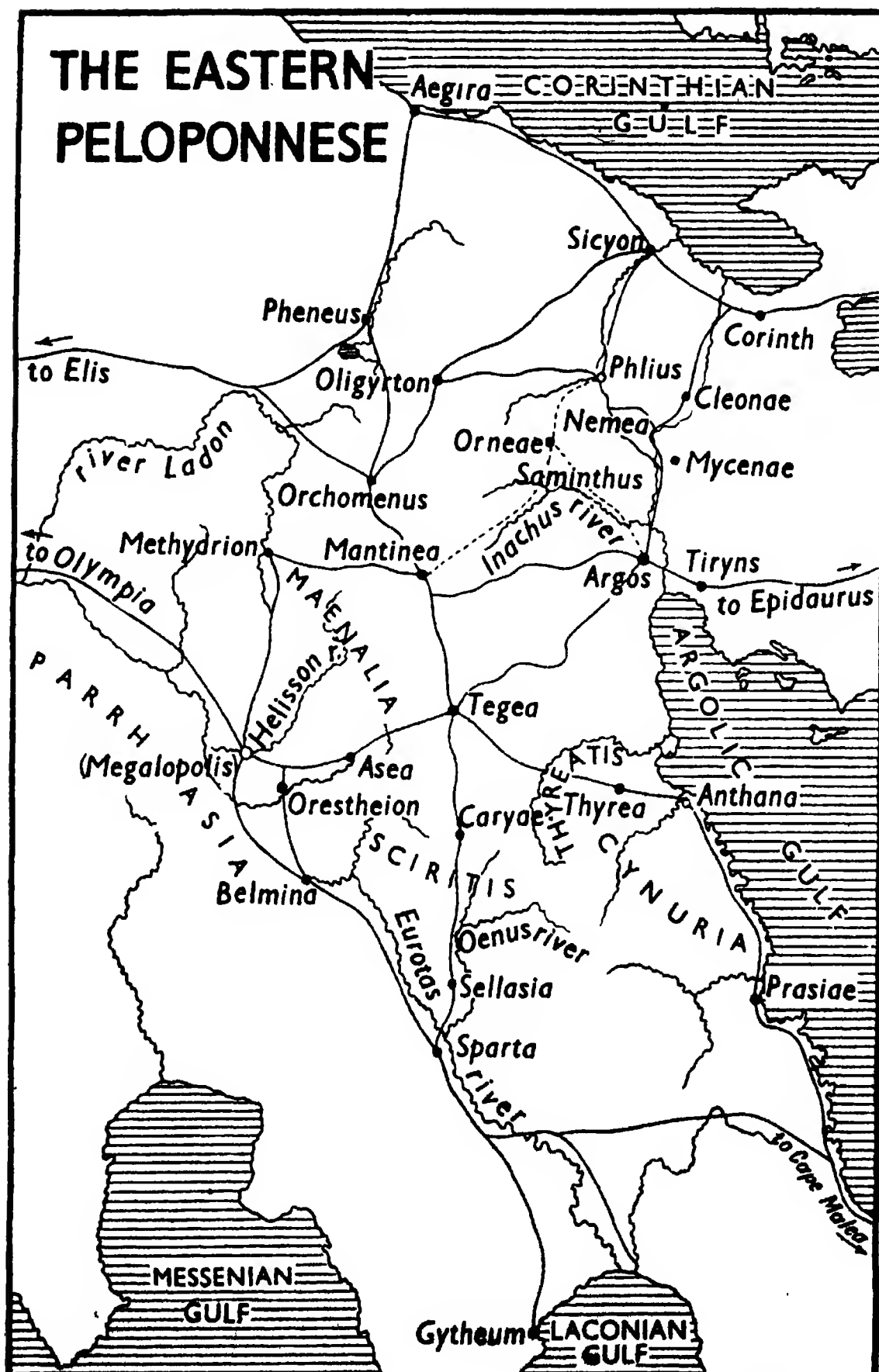
*Megara,
Boeotia,
Chalcidia,
etc., did not
agree to
accept the
peace*

harbour, Nisaea was retained by Athens, which the latter would not give up unless Thebes surrendered Plataea. Boeotians were dissatisfied because they were to restore the frontier town of Panactum to Athens under the peace. But Boeotia was the greatest gainer in the war. The Boeotians were not war-weary and although they were no match for Athens, without the assistance of the Peloponnesians, yet after the Delium they believed they would repel Athenian invasion. They, therefore refused to return the Athenian prisoners of war, or to hand over Panactum. The Chalcidians refused to hand back Amphipolis to Athens. Sparta could not compel her chief allies to implement the terms of Peace of Nicias insofar as they were concerned. Athens naturally retained Pylos and Cythera in retaliation. The Spartans endeavoured to persuade the Peloponnesian allies to accept the peace but to no purpose.

*Spartan offer
of a defensive
alliance with
Athens*

The above complications that arose over the terms of the Peace of Nicias led to apprehensions among the Spartans that Athens might declare the treaty broken. For all this Sparta was to thank herself, for in her eagerness to secure her own interests she did not hesitate to barter away the interests of her allies. Now in order to mollify the feelings of the Athenians Sparta offered a defensive alliance with Athens with a proviso that Athens would come to Sparta's help against the Helots in case of a Helot uprising. In this way Sparta beguiled the Athenians to believe that with Spartan help Athens would be in a position to control the whole of Greece. Nicias trusted the Spartans. Cimon's policy of friendship with Sparta was thus revived.

But the result was not much encouraging. Sparta had promised what was not in her power to fulfil. Now that Athens had released the Spartan prisoners on the signing of a defensive alliance Sparta began to press Athens for evacuating Pylos and avowed inability to restore Amphipolis. Athens naturally retained Pylos.



The alliance between Athens and Sparta would, the latter thought, make her late associates submissive, did not turn out to be true. 'Instead of submitting they simply made haste to secure the only protection visible to them, as well as furtherance of their quarrel with Athens, by creation of a new coalition based on Argos.' The Archidamian War (431–21 B.C.) proved that Sparta could not give the leadership that the Peloponnesians had entrusted her with. When Sparta entered into war against Athens she took up the role of liberator of Greece and was out to break up the Athenian empire which was contrary to the Greek idea of independence. But the Peace of Nicias instead of breaking up the Athenian empire only proved to be a 'vindication of Athenian power'. As it has already been mentioned, Athens lost only two places, she was free to deal as she liked with the rest of her empire. Her linked fortresses of the city and Piraeus, her navy, etc., remained as before, and given peace for ten years she could replenish her treasury. On the Spartan side, the peace led to the dissolution of the Peloponnesian League.

*The spartan
allies turn to
Argos*

*Peace of
Nicias—
vindication
of Athenian
empire*

15/**Brasidas** : Brasidas, son of Tellis, was perhaps the most successful and distinguished of the Spartan generals during the entire course of the Archidamian War. Prof. Bury remarks that 'Brasidas was a Spartan by mistake'. In fact, there was so little in common between him and his countrymen, except personal bravery characteristic of the Spartans as such, that he stood in sharp contrast with his countrymen. 'He had a restless energy and spirit of enterprise, which received small encouragement from the slow and hesitating authorities of his country.'

*Brasidas—an
un-Spartan
Spartan*

In the first year of the war when Methone in Laconia was attacked by the Athenians, it was the daring and pluck of a young Spartan officer Brasidas that saved Methone. It was with this exploit that

*Saving of
Methone*

Brasidas began his distinguished career. This was not the last time that Brasidas was to cause discomfiture to the Athenians. 'The reputation which he acquired by this exploit brought into the Spartan counsels the one man of initiative whom the Peloponnesians produced during the whole Archidamian War.'

At Pylos

At the siege of Pylos, with the Spartan forces was Brasidas who was equal in courage, enterprise and resource with Cleon. In the sea attack Brasidas commanded one of the ships and was the leading spirit. Although he pressed with his characteristic vehemence, the defence held and he fell wounded and lost his shield. 'The Athenians won his shield and the Spartans lost his counsels' comments Prof. Adcock.

*Defence of
Megara*

Again when after the capture of Nisaea, the Athenians had besieged the city of Megara, Brasidas who was in the neighbourhood of Sicyon and Corinth preparing for an expedition against Thrace, pushed on to the relief of Megara. He was by the troops of Corinth and Boeotia, to whom defence of Megara was vital. After an indecisive cavalry skirmish when Brasidas took position covering the city, the Athenians did not risk battle and retreated.

*Brasidas'
policy in
Thrace*

Athens suffered severe losses in Thrace owing to the energy of Brasidas. His policy was based on his realisation that victory for Sparta could be achieved by the destruction of the Athenian empire which was the basis of her power. The Athenian allies in Asia could not be won over, for, the naval strength of Athens was unrivalled. The only place which could be reached by land was Thrace. He, therefore, desired to be sent there to deal blow against Athens, to which the Spartans consented, because they thought it to be a peaceful method of getting rid of inconvenient individuals like Brasidas and the Helots.

Thus in 424 B.C., the alarm of the Spartans and their sense of the danger of a Helot rising made them

willing to engage in an adventure which might distract themselves from the pressing attentions of the Athenians and employ the Helots in a region where they would not be dangerous as also possibly offer an opportunity to employ the restless talents of Brasidas 'for Sparta but not at Sparta'. 700 Helots were placed at the disposal of Brasidas and funds were provided to enable him to hire 1,000 Peloponnesian hoplites. After organising this small force Brasidas made his way through Thessaly where the mass of the people favoured Athens and reached Acanthus in the peninsula of Acte. The Acanthians were in the Athenian alliance and no reason for any annoyance against Athens and naturally refused to receive Brasidas and his troops. At the instance of a small party Brasidas alone was admitted into the city where the Acanthian Assembly gave him a hearing. 'Being no bad speaker for a Lacedaemonian' Brasidas declared that Sparta took up arms to protect the liberties of Hellas against Athens and that every city that would join him would retain its autonomy which he pledged on the faith of Sparta. There was a clear threat, that should the Acanthians refuse to agree to join him, he would not thrust an alliance on them, but ravage their country and force them to consent.

Brasidas' campaign in Thrace

Winning over Acanthus

Brasidas' oratorical skill at Acanthian Assembly

Brasidas also made two points, that tributes paid by Acanthus to Athens only strengthened Sparta's foe, and the example of Acanthus in remaining in bondage of Athens might prevent others from embracing freedom. Brasidas withdrew after his speech. The most effective argument was that he had reached Acanthus before the harvest of grapes had been collected. Further, the manner and speech of Brasidas also produced a favourable impression. The Acanthians agreed to join him.

As liberator of Greece

Brasidas braved the Thracian winter and marched eastward from Arna and secured partisans both in Amphipolis and Argilus. The mistake of Eucles who was in Amphipolis to leave the bridge to the city

*Capture of
Amphipolis:
His
moderation*

without an adequate garrison and the delay on the part of Thucydides to move up the Athenian squadron from Thasos, led to the fall of Amphipolis. Thucydides arrived too late with his seven triremes. Brasidas who knew moderation offered easy terms allowing any who wished to leave the city with their belongings within five days, and the remainder was assured peaceful possession of their rights and property.

*His
diplomacy:
Winning over
of several towns*

Although Thucydides arrived too late to save the fall of Amphipolis, he repelled an attack by Brasidas on Eion, at the mouth of the river Strymon. Brasidas' appeal for reinforcements was unheeded at Sparta, for the Spartan government was more concerned to exploit his successes than to assist him. By diplomacy Brasidas won over to his side Myrcinus, Oesyne and Galespus and by the winter he won over the towns on the peninsula of Acte except Dium and Sane, and then marched into Sithonia. Athens feared more defections. 'The diplomacy of Brasidas was as dangerous as his army' and his exploits had damaged the prestige of Athens.

*Taking of
Torone*

The chief city in the peninsula of Acte was Torone where the walls were in a bad state of repairs and the garrison kept bad watch. There was a party which favoured Brasidas with whose help the city was surprised and taken. The total effect of the disasters from Delium to Torone was loss of Athenian prestige and eclipse of Cleon, Brasidas' counterpart in Athens. The last exploit of Brasidas was to repel Athenian attack on Amphipolis for its recapture. The victory was Brasidas' but he won it with his life. On this occasion proof was given of Brasidas' great popularity in Thrace. 'The Amphipolians transferred to him the heroic honours' never enjoyed by any one else except Hagnon, founder of the community.

*Repulsion of
Athenian
attack on
Amphipolis:
Death of
Brasidas*

The personal ascendancy and position of Brasidas was the most threatening of all chances of evil to the Athenians. 'It was not merely the boldness' remarks

Grote 'the fertility of aggressive resource, the quick movements, the power of stimulating the minds of soldiers—which brought efficiency to that general; but also his incorruptible probity, his good faith, his moderation, his abstinence from party cruelty or corruption, and from all intermeddling with the internal constitutions of the different cities—in strict adherence to that manifesto whereby Sparta had proclaimed herself the liberator of Greece. Such talents and such official worth had never before been seen combined.' He combined courtesy with energy. The conquests of Brasidas lowered the prestige of Athenian success, only sixteen months after the exalted capture of Sphacteria. The proceedings of Brasidas counted largely to the credit of his country and it became evident that Sparta during his generalship was for the first time shaking off her langour and had taken to herself the rapidity and enterprise once regarded to be exclusively Athenian characteristics.

His qualities

Brasidas combined in him all un-Spartan qualities like softness in speech, simplicity of manner, diplomatic skill, incorruptibility, and winning behaviour. Thucydides observes that 'he was free from political prejudices, and always showed himself tolerant, just and moderate in dealing with political questions. Besides, he was simple and straightforward; men knew that they could trust his word implicitly. But the quality which most effectually contributed to his brilliant career and perhaps most strikingly belied his Spartan origin was his power of winning popularity abroad and making himself personally liked by strangers. In Greece, the Spartan abroad was a proverb for insolence and misbehaviour. Brasidas shone out, on a dark background, by his frank and 'winning manners'.

Thucydides' characterisation of Brasidas

For the Spartans, Brasidas was a freak of fortune, yet jealous and suspicious as they were of his successes they only gave encouragements to him denying adequate forces or reinforcements at times. Their interest was to exploit his success and to make him work for

Unhelpful Sparta to Brasidas

*Challenge to
Periclean
calculation*

Sparta outside Sparta. It goes to the credit of Brasidas that it was at his hand the Periclean calculation which stood the test of ten years of the war faced serious challenge. Spared more years, Brasidas would have proved to be the greatest scourge of Athens and the Athenian empire.

*Change in
the character
of the
Athenian
Constitution*

16/Rise of the Demagogues : The Athenian Constitution and the character of the Athenian society underwent a change, rather in a rapid pace during the fifth century B.C. By far the most important change in the character of the Athenian Constitution was found in the rise of the Demagogues. Hitherto before, the office of the General would be held by persons belonging to families with military tradition. But with the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War a new type of leaders belonging to humble stations of life such as a tradesman or a mechanic, with no military background would be appointed General.

*Difference
between the
old and the
new leader-
ship*

The distinction between the old type of Generals like Miltiades, Cimon, Xanthippus, Pericles, Nicias, etc., and the new type, like Eucrates, Lysicles and Cleon was twofold: (1) There was a social contrast between the two, the former were mostly from *country families*, whereas the latter were townsmen. 'The demagogues were town-bred men whose manners and mode of speech were alike offensive to the aesthetic sense of well-bred Athenians.' They were almost invariably violent and unrestrained in gestures, and vulgar both in their language and accents. (ii) The demagogues, as Grote points out, were essentially leaders of opposition'. The demagogues were first and foremost critics not formulators of policy. The demagogues did not hold any office and their freedom arose from the lack of responsibilities which bring a sort of sobering effect.

*Character
of the
demagogues*

*Their
influence due
to their right
to individual
initiative*

But the demagogues held a great influence over the people, such as Cleon had. The Athenian Constitution gave the right of individual initiative and although no decree could be placed before the Assembly unless

recommended by the Council, factually, this constitutional safeguard proved useless because of the liberty of amendment given to the Assembly. Here the demagogues took the advantage. They were not simply critics, for measures of great importance might be passed in the Assembly in direct opposition to the advice of the Board of Generals or of the Council. The rise of the demagogues for the first time revealed one of the most fatal defects in the Athenian system.

*Their
characters as
leaders of
opposition*

The Athenian Constitution made provisions for calling upon every magistrate, civil or military to render account at the end of the year of his office and face prosecution for peculation or other offences. Generals were as well to face prosecution of bad management of campaigns. But there was no system to call to question the political authorities who were the policy-makers. For instance, for the Sicilian disaster the Athenian Assembly was to blame but it was not called to question. The penalty for failure was not on Hyperbolus and other demagogues whose scheme it was, but on unfortunate generals Pythodorus, Sophocles, and Eurymedon who were fined and exiled. The demagogues by their oratory carried the Assembly with them, determined the policy which was to be executed by others who had to bear the responsibility for its failure either due to incompetence, corruption or the like.

*Defect in the
Athenian
system of
fixing official
responsibility*

*Demagogues
went scot-free*

'The rise of the demagogues was itself a symptom of a change in the economic conditions of Attica which affected the working of the constitution in more ways than one'. Agriculture which was the main source of the economic life of the Athenians and the landed interest was still predominant in the state, down to the Persian War. But in the course of next fifty years industry and commerce became serious rivals of agriculture. The centre of gravity both political and economic began to shift from the country to the town. In the country-side while the small agriculturists looked

*Rise of
demagogues
a symptom of
a change in
economic life*

*Leadership
of the urban
proletariat
taken up by
the Dema-
gogues*

upon the landed aristocracy as their natural leaders no such relationship subsisted between the old families and the townsmen whose number was on the increase. Naturally in towns, people (the demagogues) from humble stations of life either from a manufacturer, a tradesman and the like became the leaders of the urban proletariat. It was with the urban proletariat that the demagogues had greatest influence. While for the country folk it would be difficult to put off a day's work to come to the town for political purpose, the urban proletariat did not suffer from such disadvantage. Thus with the change of leadership and importance of the urban population, townsmen played a more important part than those of the country-sides. The demagogues who held an influence on them naturally swayed the Assembly. Cleon, Cleophon, Epigenes, Eucrates, Hyperbolus and Lysicles are instances of the demagogues who rose from humble stations of life held a great influence on the urban proletariat, swayed the Assembly by their oratory and acted as leaders of opposition.

*Demagogues:
Cleon,
Cleophon,
Hyperbolus,
etc.*

Second Phase of the Peloponnesian War

1/**Alliance with Argos.** Signing of a defensive alliance by Sparta with Athens led to the actual dissolution of the Peloponnesian League. Corinth and the Chalcidians of Thebes made alliance with Argos, and so also did the Mantineans who had been extending their power in Arcadia and feared that Sparta might curtail it. Elis also joined in the alliance.

*Argive
coalition*

Neither Sparta nor Athens was satisfied at the arrangements by the Peace of Nicias. Sparta did not fulfil her pledge of returning Amphipolis, Athens in return did not leave Pylos. The whole of Peloponnesus was in commotion and people thought the alliance between Sparta and Athens meant the oppression of the smaller states.

*Peace of
Nicias
satisfied
neither Sparta
nor Athens*

The Argive coalition had something contradictory about it. Mantinea and Elis were actuated by hostility to Sparta, Corinth and the Chalcidians by their hostility to Athens. 'There was thus something inherently self-contradictory about the Argive coalition from the beginning.' The Corinthians and the Argives tried to persuade Tegea to revolt from Sparta but was unsuccessful. The decision of so important a place like Tegea not to go out of the Spartan alliance caused the rest of Peloponnesus to pause and even daunted the Corinthians. Thus when Mantinea, Argos and Elis converted their agreement for mutual defence into an alliance for common action in waging war and concluding peace, Corinth did not agree to commit herself thus far. But situation in Peloponnesus was not likely to crystallise so long as Boeotia remained uncommitted. Attempts were made to bring Boeotia into the Argive alliance but eventually it failed because the Boeotians resolved not to do anything so long as Sparta left them alone.

*Contradiction
in Argive
coalition*

*Spartan
negotiations
for getting
back Pylos*

*Spartan
alliance with
Boeotia
—an affront
to Athens*

*Fate of
Argive
coalition seal
on return of
Boeotia to
Spartan
alliance*

*Attempt for a
quadruple
alliance
between
Athens, Argos,
Mantineia
and Elis*

*War party
vs. Peace
party in
Athens*

In the mean time Sparta continued pourparlers with Athens and in order to get back Pylos, Sparta found that the Athenian prisoners in Boeotia and Panactum must have to be obtained from Boeotia. The price for this, the Boeotians demanded was signing of a separate alliance by Sparta with Boeotia as she had done with Athens. This Sparta did. But the Boeotians before surrendering Panactum razed it to the ground. The Spartans alliance with Boeotia was a grave insult to Athens for Sparta and Athens by an alliance had agreed not to make any independent alliance. This was a breach of faith by Sparta. Thus when the Spartan envoys went to Athens to deliver the Athenian prisoners and Panactum, and obtain return of Pylos, they were dismissed harshly and Pylos was not returned.

Return of Boeotia to the Spartan camp sealed the fate of the Argive coalition. In panic, on the receipt of a false news that Spartan-Boeotian alliance had been signed with the consent of Athens, Argos hurriedly sought to renew its treaty of neutrality with Sparta. But when it became known that Spartan-Boeotian alliance had strained the relations between Sparta and Athens, Argos yielded to the suggestions of Alcibiades, and acting in unison with Mantineia and Elis sent envoys to Athens to negotiate a quadruple alliance between Athens, Argos, Mantineia and Elis. The Spartans sent three of their envoys to Athens close upon the heels of the Argive ambassador to convince Athens that Spartan-Boeotian alliance had not been concluded to the detriment of Athens, and to arrange for the return of Pylos.

War party in Athens at that time was being led by Hyperbolus, the lamp-maker and Nicias led the peace-party. Nicias was of the opinion that except under intolerable provocation Athens should not reopen war with Sparta, and Sparta's non-fulfilment of the terms of the Peace of Nicias should not be by itself a cause for that. After all, disruption of the Spartan coalition,

Nicias argued, was quite as much of value as the fulfilment of the terms of the peace. But the fact that Sparta had regained her allies by ceasing to press them to satisfy the terms of the peace, Nicias' arguments did not adequately meet those of his opponents. Hyperbolus who was now a reincarnation of the political tenets and methods of Cleon, was strengthened by the coming to the ranks of the war party a brilliantly gifted person, Alcibiades. He was opposed to collaboration with Sparta and was in favour of Argive-Athenian alliance. The general point of view he presented was that Sparta wanted to crush Argos first and Athens next. Through a stratagem Alcibiades staged a convincing demonstration that the Spartans were not to be trusted. This he did by promising support to the Spartan ambassadors and inducing them to declare that they had no plenipotentiary authority. This having been foolishly done by the Spartan ambassadors, Alcibiades openly denounced them of duplicity and convinced the Athenians that Sparta was simply out to get back Pylos and so that she might be able to begin war against Athens. Nicias was sent to Sparta as the head of an embassy to deliver to Sparta what was virtually an ultimatum that besides rebuilding Panactum and restoring Amphipolis, the Spartans must renounce the Boeotian alliance, or else Athens would enter into a separate alliance with Argos. Nicias could not accomplish anything in Sparta. Accordingly in 420 B.C. Athens signed an alliance with Argos, Mantinea and Elis for a hundred years, which was defensive in form but offensive by implication.

Alcibiades' stratagem

Signing of the Quadruple Alliance (420 B.C.)

Mantinea and Elis were already in war with Sparta, and Athens was now committed by the new alliance to defend them. The peculiarity of the interstate relations in Greece was that 'the atmosphere surrounding city-nations was not easily penetrated by the spirit of neighbourliness. But the spirit of party was more pervasive'. The effect of the re-alignment of

Democratic bloc comprising Athens, Argos, Mantinea and Elis vs. Aristocratic bloc of Sparta, Boeotia, Megara and Corinth

states was the 'consolidation of Athens, Argos, Mantinea and Elis into a democratic bloc and the gravitation back to Sparta of aristocratic states like Boeotia, Megara and Corinth'.

*Alcibiades
foments war-
spirit in
Athens*

*Alcibiades'
policy
appealed to
restless spirit
of the
Athenian
youth*

*Athenians'
compromise
between war
and peace
spirits—
Alcibiades and
Nicias elected
generals in
419 B.C.*

*Alcibiades'
offensive war*

For the greater part of the year 420 B.C. in which the quadruple alliance between Athens, Argos, Mantinea and Elis was signed, neither Athens nor Sparta did anything further to endanger the peace. But the time was industriously employed by Alcibiades in Athens in fomenting war-spirit. Sparta, on the other hand became aware that her prestige abroad was not what it had been. Spartan ally Boeotia took her hands off her colony Heraclea in Trachis on the ground that weakened by a defeat at the hands of the neighbouring tribes it was in the danger of falling into the possession of Athens. Alcibiades wanted the Athenians to place their army and navy at his disposal to the assistance of Athens' Peloponnesian allies, the object of which was to crush Sparta completely. Alcibiades' policy naturally appealed to the restless spirit of action that was strong among the Athenian youth. The hatred of the Spartans and the hope of dominion over the whole of the Hellas naturally had an instinctive response among the Athenians. Nicias on the other hand was insistent on a defensive policy and to avoid rupture with Sparta. But the Athenians instead of supporting any one of the two opinions—one offensive, the other defensive, re-elected both Alcibiades and Nicias as generals in 419 B.C.

Alcibiades took his re-election as a support to his policy of offensive war and went to Peloponnesus extending and consolidating their alliance. Patrae in Achaea was won over to the Athenian alliance. His attempt to build a fort at Phium was, however, prevented by the Corinthians and Sicyonians. Alcibiades' next move was to win over Epidaurus to the Athenian alliance and for this purpose the Argives working as Alcibiades' agent picked up a quarrel with Epidaurus which stirred Sparta to action. The Argives had

overrun the open country of Epidaurus. A last moment attempt by Athens at the instance of Nicias did not succeed due to the insistence of Corinth on the ground that there could be no peace when the Argives and Epidaurians were in actual war. The Spartans mobilised their entire army and marched up to Caryl. Alcibiades proceeded with 1,000 hoplites. But as the Spartans did not move further, Alcibiades returned home. Fighting between the Argives and the Epidaurians, however, went on and when the Epidaurians were about to surrender, the Spartans landed a garrison at Epidaurus. But Athens resiled from the position of sure war. Nicias, now had his chance and charged his opponents—the war party as having been willfully and needlessly provocative. The result was that in 418 B.C. Alcibiades was not elected to the generalship. Nicias, Laches and Nicostratus were elected and were in charge of the military operations. The effect of this change was to make Athenian participation in the Peloponnesian war strictly limited to defence needs.

Argive-Epidaurian conflict

Athens withdraws from the position of sure war

Alcibiades not elected general in (418 B.C.): Athenian policy strictly limited to defence needs

In the mean time Sparta concentrated her force at Phlius—‘the finest Hellenic force assembled up to that time’ under King Agis, for attacking Argos. Agis planned for not merely the defeat of the Argives but for their total annihilation. He divided his forces into three parts for the purposes of a three-pronged attack. The Athenians upon whom the Argives had relied having not put up an appearance, the Argives were heading towards sure doom. Two prominent Argives Thrasyllus and Alciphron who were members of aristocratic faction in Argos wished to overthrow democracy in Argos and substitute a Spartan alliance in place of the Athenian alliance, met Agis on their own initiative at the point of the beginning of the war. They urged him not to begin war and assured him of giving satisfaction and making peace. Agis readily agreed to the proposal without caring to consult any one except one of the ephors and concluded an armistice for four months in which a peace was to

Sparta mustered a great force at Phlius to attack Argos

King Agis divides the Spartan forces into three parts and plans a three-pronged attack

Aristocratic faction in Argos negotiates an armistice with Agis

be concluded. The Argive commanders also accepted the truce without consulting their soldiers or their associates.

*Armistice—
its repercussions
on the
Spartans
and the
Argives*

*Alcibiades
convinces the
Argives to*

*offensive
war policy*

*Attack on
Orchomenus
and Tegea
stirs Sparta
to action*

*Agis pro-
ceeds with a
strong force*

The Spartans in general were critical of Agis' conduct in signing an armistice. This, to their mind, had thrown off a sure opportunity of success. The Spartan allies also shared the same feelings. The rank and file also smarted under the feeling that a sure victory had been forsaken. Likewise the Argive soldiers who regarded their position strategically invulnerable ascribed to their generals who agreed to the proposal of armistice treasonable motive. But for Thrasyllus' taking refuge in a temple, he would have been stoned to death. Yet insofar as their relationship with Athens was concerned, even honest and wise Argives who were not traitors regarded Athens as a broken reed and began canvassing the wisdom of withdrawal from the Athenian alliance. Athens did not come to the assistance of Argos at the time of crisis and even the limited assistance that she had sent arrived too late only to be dismissed by the Argive magistrates. Alcibiades at this juncture succeeded in convincing the Argives that the truce had victimised them. The Argives also were easily convinced of the fact that they had been cheated out of a sure victory by their generals. Although the strength of the coalition had been largely impaired by the above incident, yet it was strong enough to lead to the fatal decision of taking up offensive warfare. Attempts on Orchomenus, and in particular, on Tegea stirred Sparta to action. Loss of Orchomenus drove the Spartans to fury. Agis started for Arcadia with a strong force. At Tegea he was joined by reinforcements from Lepvum, Herea and Maenalia and without waiting for reinforcements from Corinth, Boeotia, etc., who were to join him at Mantinea, Agis sought out the enemy in order to give battle at once. But when his soldiers were at stone's throw of the enemy, Agis countermanded his order and withdrew his forces rapidly. Agis and his soldiers

seemed to have lost all the Spartan virtues. The Argive confederates came down into the plain in battle array in order to engage the enemy wherever they were found. The army of Agis moving in column of route suddenly blinded upon the confederate army. For a moment there was terrible confusion and consternation in the ranks of the Spartans, but the discipline of the Spartans soon asserted itself. In the battle that followed, the Spartans came forward singing their war songs and keeping step and evenness of front. The Argives and their confederates won a fruitless victory on both the flank but had to court defeat at the end due to the attack by Agis and his men at the centre. Vastly outnumbered, the Mantineans and the Argive regulars sought safety in flight. The fugitives reassembled at Mantinea and were joined by the Eleans and 1,000 fresh troops from Athens. But they had no mood to try their luck in another engagement. The strength of the Spartans and the weakness of the Argives had become too apparent already. 'By a single battle, with a loss of 300 men the Spartans re-established completely their military prestige, and twenty-four years were to elapse before any Greeks ventured again to face them in open field.'

*The Battle of
Mantinea:
Defeat of
the Argive
coalition*

The campaign in Arcadia, thus came to an abrupt end. The Spartans returned home. The Argive confederates now decided to surround the city of Epidaurus by fortifications and to open a direct road to Athens. All this was meant to save the Argives. But work was only partially done, Athens doing her part, others giving up the work soon after they began it. Leaving a mixed garrison in the Athenian section, they all withdrew. The disintegration of the Argive coalition was thus nearly complete. In the autumn of 418 B.C. Agis led a Spartan force to Tegea wherefrom despatched Lichas to Argos for the purpose of offering the Argives the choice between peace or war. Alcibiades went to Argos to argue the Argives to continue to be in war with Sparta but with no success. The Argive

*Near disin-
tegration of
Argive
coalition*

*Dissolution
of the
Quadruple
Alliance*

aristocrats had already entered into a secret understanding with Sparta, opposed Alcibiades' and carried the day against him. Argos reversed her policy and repudiated her treaty with Athens, Elis and Mantinea. Thus the Quadruple Alliance was dissolved. Argos joined Sparta in an alliance for fifty years. The rest of the Peloponnesian states and Spartan allies outside Peloponnesus were to share the alliance with Argos on the same terms as between Argos and Sparta. 'Its fundamental condition was a notable concession to Argive pride and ambition—that in case a general expedition of Peloponnesians and their allies was necessary, not Sparta alone, but Sparta and Argos, deliberating together, should decide, what forces each member should contribute.' A natural consequence of this alliance was an agreement between Argos and Sparta to wage war against Athens if they would not evacuate Peloponnesus. It was also agreed that neither Sparta nor Argos would enter into peace or war unilaterally but together. The result of all this was that Athens had to withdraw her troops from Epidaurus; Mantinea released her dependencies and made a thirty years' peace with Sparta. Perdiccas of Macedon joined Sparto-Argive alliance as a first step to his withdrawal from Athenian alliance. The Spartan victory in the battle of Mantinea yielded the above political fruits and 'at this moment the position of Sparta in Greece seemed stronger than it had been at any time since the formation of the Delian confederacy'.

*Argos enters
into an
Alliance with
Sparta*

*Political
results of the
Battle of
Mantineia*

*Reasons
behind
Spartan
triumph*

The opportunity of the Spartan triumph was created by Alcibiades and Argos by deciding upon a policy of war. But even after that the triumph itself was assured by Athens herself by refusing to risk her main army in the Peloponnesus. This was caused mainly by Nicias as also by the weakness of the government in Athens occasioned by the violence and equality of parties. There is reason to suppose that the Athenian alliance with Elis, Argos and Mantinea was

an error. Actual mistake lay in the way in which Athens made use of this coalition.

Greek democracies would not allow the state officials go unpunished for their failures. Votes for ostracism of both Nicias and Alcibiades as also of Hyperbolus were taken in which Nicias and Alcibiades combined their interests and made each other's supporters not to vote. The result was that required number of votes (6,000) were not there for Nicias or Alcibiades and both were saved. But Hyperbolus was voted for ostracism.

*Ostracism of
Hyperbolus*

Soon after, opportunity offered itself for regaining Argos by Athens under circumstances of Spartan weakness due to the shaky loyalty of the Peloponnesians to Sparta. Parties responsible for this were the Argive friends of Sparta who wanted to effect an oligarchical revolution in their state. On the other hand, the admission of Argos into the Peloponnesian partnership would only be tolerable to the Spartans when the Argive government was run by partisans subservient to the Spartans. A force of 2,000 men comprising Spartan and Argives whose aristocratic sympathies were pronouncedly notorious went forth to set up an oligarchy in Sicyon and the two together to overthrow democracy in Argos. This was done by a *coup* in early Spring of 417 B.C.

*Weakness in
Sparto-
Argive
relations*

The Spartan activities in setting of oligarchies in Argos and other places created an uneasiness in Peloponnesus. The Peloponnesians, the Corinthians in particular, seemed to have thought that the best check to Spartan arrogance was the freedom of Argos. Within Argos, the *coup* provoked terrible resentment and the Argives gathered round a central revolutionary body which was marking time for rising against the forcibly set up oligarchy. Nor was there any dearth of outside sympathy for the Argive democrats. In July, 417 B.C. when the Spartans were preoccupied with a religious celebration the Argives rose up against

*Setting up of
oligarchy in
Argos*

*Rebellion of
the Argives*

*Peloponnesian
Congress:
Joint action
authorised*

their masters. In prolonged street-fighting caused by the rising, the oligarchs were slain or expelled, and before any Spartan help came all was over. A Peloponnesian Congress was held for deciding upon the question of action upon Argos. In the Congress there was a strong opinion in favour of granting autonomy to Argos. When this was not agreed to and a decision to make joint war against Argos was taken, Corinth refused to take part in the combined Peloponnesian expedition against Argos.

*Refusal of
Corinth to
join*

*Argos
renews
alliance with
Athens*

The Argives preferring democracy to peace renewed their alliance with Athens, through Alcibiades, for fifty years. Their aim was, however, not to challenge Spartan headship in the Peloponnesus but simply to preserve their independence. To avoid blockade Argos was sought to be connected with the sea by long walls. The project was of course devised by Alcibiades. Enough number of skilled carpenters and masons were sent to help the Argives in completing the work, but before that could be done the Spartans came with troops. Their hopes of assistance from the Argive oligarchs were belied. They, therefore, dismantled the wall, massacred the inhabitants of Hysiae which they captured, and departed. The Argives retaliated by a raid into Phlius which had given asylum to the Argive oligarchs. Alcibiades carried away on an Athenian ship 300 Argives who were either disloyal to democracy or loyal to Sparta.

*Spartan
expedition
against
Argos*

*Retaliation
by Argos*

*Spartan
invasion of
Argos*

In the next two years, i.e. from 416 to 414 B. C. Sparta made several attempts to restore oligarchy in Argos and Athens made efforts to preserve democracy. Four expeditions were made against Argos in at least two of which the Spartans ravaged the Argive country, and twice the Athenians came by sea to the assistance of Argos to find the invaders gone. Thus there was no direct engagement between Sparta and Athens. The Argives retaliated the plundering of their country by invading and plundering the Spartan land of Thyrea. The Athenians sailed with a fleet along the coast of

Peloponnesus and put landing parties ashore in Laconia, at Epidaurus, Limera and Prasiae. This gave the Spartans the pretext for opening the general war with clean conscience.

Nicias was of the opinion that the area where Athens should conduct military operations was Thrace and not Peloponnesus. His contention received added force due to the secession of Dium. Nicias, therefore, launched an expedition with the help of Perdiccas, the fickle-minded, shifty king of Macedon, to put down the rebels. But Perdiccas was already in secret league with Sparta and deserted the Athenians. The expedition was naturally, a failure. Patching up an armistice with the Chalcidians the Athenians turned on their disloyal ally, Perdiccas. Forsaken by the Spartans and the Chalcidians, Perdiccas was compelled to change sides again. Athenians then turned their efforts to the recovery of Amphipolis. But despite support given by Perdiccas and numerous Thracians their attack and blockade of the city did not yield any result. Before anything decisive was arrived at, 'when bad news from Sicily forced them to suspend operations'.

Change in the area of military operations

Athenian attempt to recover Amphipolis ends in failure

It is possible to trace a change in the Athenian policy. She was no longer willing to commit herself seriously either in Thrace or in Peloponnesus. There was a reversion to the policy of Periclean peace the purpose of which was to make Athens the most splendid and enjoyable place in Greece. Periclean policy of accumulation of reserves of money, erection of buildings, erection of a new temple of Athena, etc., were begun. 'The spirit of the epoch, like that of Nicias himself was conservative.' Tributes of the allies were reassessed on a lower scale in 421 B.C., yet there was an accumulation of a financial reserve of 3,000 talents in six years. Athenian courts exercised commercial and criminal jurisdiction, a sovereign tribunal had the competence to dispose of serious political offences. Transmarine traffic continued to be regulated

Revival of the Periclean peace and splendour

*Athenian
idea of
empire*

in the interest of the Athenian market. Athenian weights and measures were prescribed for the whole empire. The idea penetrated into the subconsciousness of the Athenians that the sea and all that used it were theirs and under their protection. Melos, a tiny Dorian island which had the temerity to disregard the assessment of tribute on her had to pay the penalty. The island was starved to submission and all adult male inhabitants were killed, women and children were sold to slavery. But another island was soon to 'tempt Athens to its nemesis'.

CHAPTER 11

Athenian Expedition to Sicily

1/Affairs of Segesta and Selinus: In 416 B.C. the Athenian attention was turned to Sicily where the Dorian city of Selinus and Athenian ally Segesta had fallen out. It became an unequal fight when Syracuse joined the side of Selinus, on promise of payment of the expenses of the expedition. Hard pressed both by land and sea, Segesta was forced to look for outside help. Appeal to Acargas and Carthage having being rejected, the Segestans approached the Athenians with whom they were bound by an alliance. The Athenians felt, out of their own interest, to intervene. The Segestan envoys who came to Athens to request for Athenian help promised to pay the entire expense of the expedition. But the question was whether Segesta was really capable of paying for the expedition. This monetary consideration apart, the argument which carried the greatest weight was that if Syracuse was permitted to become the Mistress of Sicily some day she would come out with her vast armament to assist the Peloponnese against Athens. This point the Segestan envoys drove home into the minds of the Athenians. Yet the Athenians behaved with circumspection and despatched commissioners to Segesta to make an on-the-spot enquiry as to the financial ability of the Segestans. At the same time a spirit of adventure had seized them and greed and hopes of aggrandisement in the west burned in them. One of the main objects of the Athenian intervention was to keep alive the local opposition to the imperialistic expansion of Syracuse and to show that Athens was still a factor in the west, as also to create more favourable conditions for the trade of Piraeus and Athens. In the spring of 415 B.C. the Athenian commissioners returned from Segesta with glowing

Conflict between Segesta and Selinus: Syracuse joins on its side of Selinus

Segestan appeal to Athens for help

Athenian decision to intervene

accounts of the riches of city and with sixty talents in hands as an earnest of the Segestans' ability to pay for the expedition. But in reality the Athenian commissioners were tricked, Segesta did not possess enough riches to meet the cost of the Athenian expedition.

A fleet of 60 ships under Nicias, Alcibiades and Lamachus to lead the expedition

The Athenian voted to send to Sicily a fleet of sixty ships and instead of appointing one commander with full powers, appointed three, Nicias, Alcibiades and Lamachus. Nicias was vehemently against sending the expedition, while Alcibiades was in its favour. In fact, Nicias was voted to the command much against his will. In a second Assembly held for drawing up the details, Nicias, even contrary to convention and law reopened the question of advisability of sending the expedition decided by the first Assembly. Nicias tried, without success, to dissuade the people by enlarging upon the magnitude of armaments needed for the success. He also dwelt upon the unwisdom of leading an expedition to Sicily leaving the powerful enemies near home planning for falling upon Athens if not at the moment when Athenian forces are divided, certainly at in the event of a defeat. Further, Athenian subjects both old and new were still in revolt. Should Athens succeed in conquering Sicily, it would be difficult to hold it in subjection. The rebuttal of Nicias' arguments came from Alcibiades. He pleaded the necessity of forging ahead, and preserving Athens' superiority by practising and making every call for help an occasion for expansion. Alcibiades held out prospect of conquest of Sicily, Greek Italy, Carthage and the Carthagian empire. The achievement of the scheme would indubitably make Athens the unquestioned Mistress of the whole of the Hellas. Nicias was worsted and the commanders were given *carte blanche* to make the expedition of any size they thought fit. One hundred triremes, and five thousand hoplites were also given, as per the estimates of Nicias for the successful prosecution of the expedition. Three thousand talents were set

Nicias' arguments against the decision

Alcibiades' rebuttal

Military and naval assistance as per Nicias' requisition agreed to

apart for the expedition to be appropriated according to need.

Enthusiasm ran not among the Athenians who soon became busy in putting their triremes in good trim and mobilising the naval and the land-forces required of their allies, mustering heavy-armed troops from their own citizens. Supply and commissariat were ensured. For about four months following the decision to send the expedition Athens was full of the bustle of preparation.

*Hectic
preparation
for the
expedition*

On a night in May, shortly before the expedition was to sail, the stone busts of God Hermes which were carved on pillars at the doorways of temples, and of private houses were all but one, defaced and mutilated. This manifestation of irreverence for sacred things outraged the religious susceptibilities of the Athenians and made them extremely excited. It was naturally regarded as a bad omen for the expedition. The enemies of Alcibiades implicated him in charges of having burlesqued in a private house the sacred Mysteries of Eleusis and denounced him by name for the impiety of defacement of the busts of Hermes. This was explained by them as a conspiracy to upset democracy.

*Mutilation
of the busts
of Hermes:
Alcibiades
held guilty
by his
enemies*

Alcibiades demanded an immediate trial in order that the campaign of calumny might not be more vigorously conducted by his enemies in his absence. But his enemies most active of whom were demagogues Peisander and Androcles, prevented it. For they knew that there was little chance of securing Alcibiades' condemnation while he was at Athens and wanted to strike at him at a more convenient moment. The expedition was allowed to sail with this grave charge hanging over his head and Alcibiades pledged to return for trial within a certain number of days.

*Expedition
sails with
the charge
hanging on
Alcibiades'
head*

As the Armada put out to sea, and 'never' as Thucydides says 'had a greater expedition been sent from the homeland', never was there an enterprise such as this so furnished as to warrant the greatest hopes for

No realisation on the part of the Syracusans of the peril

the future, rumours of its coming reached Syracuse. Hermocrates, the Syracusan, suggested that their own fleet should sail to Tarentum and there lie in wait. This might as he suggested scare away the Athenians, for Nicias, as he pointed out, would seize at the first excuse to abandon the whole enterprise. This suggestion was opposed by Athenagoras. All this revealed the truth that Syracusans had not yet realised the extent of the impending peril.

Council at Rhegium

The Armada in the mean time mustered at Corcyra and thence crossed to Rhegium. Its size now reached as large as 136 triremes, 6,400 troops. From Corcyra three ships were despatched to explore the situation in the island of Segesta. They returned to Rhegium with the gloomy news that Segesta was not in a position to pay for the expedition. The three admirals held a Council to review the situation. But their opinions were at wide variance.

Nicias' suggestion

Nicias proposed that they should sail to Selinus to settle the Segesta-Selinus quarrel. If Segesta would pay the cost the Council should deliberate on the next step. If, however, Segesta could not pay, the Armada should circumnavigate Sicily and make a demonstration of the Athenian strength to all Sicilian cities and its encouragement to the allies of Athens, and sail home again. This was nothing but politics and not war. Both Alcibiades and Lamachus meant war but their strategies differed. Lamachus pleaded instant attack on Syracuse. But Alcibiades was for delay until they had collected some allies from among the Sicilian cities, taken Messina and sent ultimatum to Syracuse and Selinus. These two admirals also differed as to the base of operation. When there was such a divided counsel, Lamachus voted for Alcibiades thinking his plan was at least second best. Alcibiades' plan was therefore accepted and he sailed across of Messina to try and win over the city. Sixty ships sailed to Sicilian Naxos and were admitted to the city. The rest of the armada stayed at Rhegium.

Alcibiades and Lamachus' suggestions

Alcibiades' suggestion wins

Modern opinion has almost unanimously approved of the plan of Lamachus and condemned those of Nicias and Alcibiades. Nicias' plan of an *impressive, naval* parade was indeed no plan. It was old politics, no war strategy. Alcibiades' plan to wait till as many allies could be made from among the Sicilian cities through negotiations was born of his passion for diplomacy,—as Holm puts it. Curtius' suggestion that Alcibiades did not desire a speedy victory has been regarded as ridiculous by Henderson. Grote, Freeman and others agree that 'the Council of War was one of the turning points of fate, and that, had Lamachus been allowed his way the whole course of Greek history might have been changed. For Syracuse would have fallen then and there'. Henderson, however, doubts if it would be so easy, despite the fact that Syracuse was unprepared and absurdly over confident. The Syracusans were at least forewarned of the coming attack and naturally could not have been taken by surprise and surprise was the essential condition of success of Lamachus' plan. Henderson considers Alcibiades as the best of the three admirals as strategist and his plan was rightly based on the fact that Sicily was a house divided against itself.

*Criticism of
the plans of
the admirals*

*Lamachus'
plan—the
best of the
three*

*Henderson's
view—
Alcibiades'
plan best of
the three*

Messana did not agree to admit Athenians within their city but allowed them to stay in a market outside the wall. Catana also shut them out. The Athenian fleet now went round Syracuse and by a surprise attack occupied Catana and made it a base of attack. This was followed by a skirmish with the Syracusan cavalry. It was at this time, in the midst of operations that a trireme arrived with orders for Alcibiades to return at once to Athens to stand his trial. With justifiable anger, an anger which was to be most disastrous in its consequences, Alcibiades defied the orders for return and disappeared. In a small coasting ship he reached Peloponnese as an exile condemned to death. He went to Argos where he was pursued by the Athenians. He then fled to Sparta. 'At Sparta

*Alcibiades
recalled to
stand his
trial*

*Alcibiades
fled to
Sparta as an
exile*

he, Socrates' pupil, invented a new theory of patriotism. His master's subtle dialectic was not wasted.' 'He is the true patriot' he declared to the bewildered Spartans, 'not who, when unjustly exiled, refrains from attacking his country, but who in the warmth of his longing for her seeks to recover her without regard to the means. The country which I am now attacking is not my country. It is only my country when I have recovered her' (Thucydides).

*Nicias and
Lamachus
left in
conduct of
the campaign*

Nicias and Lamachus now remained to conduct the campaign. The recall of Alcibiades enabled Nicias to carry on with the campaign more on his own lines. He embarked on an expedition to the west of Sicily and in the course of which he visited Segesta and extracted 30 talents from its melancholy citizens. In the winter of 415 there was a battle at *Dascon* on the shore of the Great Harbour of Syracuse. Nicias won the day killed 260 of the enemies and lost only 50 of his own men. But it was not a considerable battle and the Athenians did not make use of their victory. Perhaps, as an Oxford editor of Thucydides remarks, Nicias discovered that the position secured by the victory was not suitable at all.

*Battle of
Dascon*

*Athenian
victory—
fruitless*

*Athenian
horsemen
arrive*

In the following year a contingent of 250 horsemen came from Athens to be horsed on the spot, and 300 talents. Now followed the investment of the city of Syracuse.

*Syracuse's
defence*

2/Siege of the city of Syracuse: The city of Syracuse was surrounded by wall and was impregnable. The enemies were masters of the sea. Naturally, so long as supplies could arrive into the city there was no question of its surrender. They had no other thought now than to make resistance successful. After their defeat at Dascon, they naturally anticipated a siege of their city. They built an advance wall to secure all passages between the heights above and the plains. Apart from preparations from the military point of view the Syracusans tried diplomacy. They sent

emissaries to Corinth and Sparta to persuade the Lacedaemonian to renew war with Athens and if possible to get military assistance. Corinth readily agreed to help the Syracusans. The Spartans were, however, hesitant. But they realised that they must do something to help Syracuse. Alcibiades, who was then at Sparta, disclosed the plans, expectations and fears of the Athenians. 'Once Syracuse was starved to submission all Sicily and Italy would be mobilised for a grand attack by sea and land on the Peloponnese'. The Spartans therefore saw the need of sending help to Syracuse, if not by despatching troops at least by sending a general, so that Athens might not dare to send all her forces to Sicily in fear of possible attack by Sparta on Athens.

*Emissaries
to Corinth
and Sparta
for help*

*Alcibiade's
advice to
send troops to
assist the
Syracusans*

In the mean time the Athenians routed the Syracusans who came to resist and retired to their city leaving half their number and the commander dead. The Athenians made good the ground they had seized, built a fort at Labdalon on the northern edge of the plateau. They then proceeded to invest Syracuse completely. Their plan was to construct a wall from Trogilus on the northern coast to the Great Harbour. For this purpose they occupied a place called Syce and built a *kuklos*, i.e. a circular fort, after routing some Syracusan cavalry that came to stop the work. The wall once built would place the city at the mercy of the Athenian navy and the only course open to the Syracusans was to build a cross wall to prevent completion of the Athenian wall. But after building a cross wall beyond the line of the Athenian wall, the Syracusans left a guard and went home. The Athenians attacked the guard which fled and the cross wall was destroyed. A second attempt was made to stop the Athenians by building another cross wall. A palisade was raised by them and strong guard marched out to defend it. Lamachus also proceeded with troops to attack the Syracusan guards. In the battle that followed Lamachus was slain. The routed Syracusans now took heart

*Athenian
success :
Building
of wall*

*Death of
Lamachus*

*Syracusans
attack
Athenian
circular fort*

and proceeded against the circular fort itself. Nicias was sick. He had no troops with him in the fort. Under his orders fire was set to all available timber outside the fort—the flames of which prevented the Syracusans to proceed near the fort and it was saved.

*Syracusans
defeated*

In the battle fought in the open the Syracusans were defeated. The Athenian fleet entered the Great Harbour at the sight of which every Syracusan hastened within the city for shelter. The Syracusan cross wall was broken like the first. Nothing could now enter the beleagured city by sea or land except through a small part of the Athenian wall yet remaining unfinished.

*Alcibiades
urges
Spartan help
to Syracuse*

Alcibiades at Sparta urged upon the Spartans to save Syracuse by sending reinforcement if not a Spartan army at least a Spartan general immediately. Gylippus was appointed and he sailed at once with a small squadron of four ships and reached Tarentum. Nicias had ample time to intercept Gylippus. But given to lethargy and procrastination he despatched his ships to block the straits when it was too late. Gylippus entered the city through the portion of the unfinished Athenian wall and arrived just in time to save Syracuse. The enthusiasm that was created on his arrival became a decisive factor in the whole episode. There were two battles, in the first Gylippus was routed but in the second one the Athenians were completely defeated.

*Gylippus
sent:
Defeat of
Nicias*

*Dire state of
Nicias and
his men and
ships*

Winter came and Nicias clung to the shore entrenchment to be buffeted by the chill weather and to watch the confident Syracusans practising their men on ships, preparing for naval battle. Nicias' idle ships began rotting in water and in sickness and despondency one thought that was uppermost in his mind was a safe return home. He was virtually besieged than a besieger. Nicias in his letter to his countrymen, a letter both pathetic and informative, referred to his grievous illness, hostility of all Sicily to the Athenians, requested for either reinforcement or recall, and plenty of money.

The Athenians at home decided to despatch a second expedition. Eurymedon was at once sent with a small squadron of ships as an advance party to be followed by the rest of the expeditionary force under Demosthenes. Nicias was neither recalled nor superseded. In the mean time Gylippus returned to Syracuse with further reinforcements and a joint attack by land and sea upon the Athenians was undertaken. The Athenian forts were carried by storm and the Athenians were now confined more strictly than ever to the beach. The naval enterprise of the Syracusans, however, miscarried and the Athenian navy was again victorious. But despite this victory the Athenians were not sufficiently strong to guarantee safe entry of convoys into the Great Harbour. The Syracusans again planned an attack both by land and sea and won the day against the Athenians. The Athenians retreated behind the palisades. Many of their ships were damaged and seven ships were sunk. For the first time were the Athenians completely defeated in a naval battle in the war.

Eurymedon and Demosthenes sent with reinforcement

Athenian victory

Syracuse plans for attack

As the Syracusans were preparing to renew the battle and bring the war to a conclusion Eurymedon and Demosthenes sailed into the Great Harbour with 73 ships and 5,000 hoplites. Demosthenes decided to strike at once and roll up enemy's line from west to east. Demosthenes took Eurymedon's fort of the Syracusans at night. Gylippus came hastening to save the situation and despite hugeness of Athenian numbers confusion prevailed and in the baffling moonlight friend killed friend. Demosthenes' great attack failed miserably and all was lost on land. Syracuse proved impregnable. Demosthenes now suggested sailing back to Athens. But Nicias 'stubborn and selfish refused to agree'. He allowed himself to be deluded by the thought that treachery would eventually deliver up the city of Syracuse to the Athenians.

Demosthenes' night attack fails dismally

Suggestion of sailing back home

Demosthenes and Eurymedon next suggested withdrawal of the Athenian fleet from the Great Harbour

*Eurymedon
and
Demosthenes' suggestion
of withdrawal from
the Great
Harbour*

and to shift their base to Catana or Thapsus. But this was not acceptable to Nicias, after all, as Thucydides points out, he dared not return home and face the people. Weeks after weeks the Athenian clung to their inconvenient stations under Plemmyrion hill, sickness ravaged their lines and the 'obstinate stubbornness of an ailing fool kept' them upon that hostile shore'.

Nicias' superstition

In the mean time Gylippus again went inland and returned with reinforcements. Nicias, at last belatedly agreed to withdraw the expedition and secret orders for departure was issued. When all was made ready for departure an 'eclipse of the moon took place and superstition would not permit Nicias and his men to stir before a full-moon. They had to wait for twenty-seven days more before there was full-moon. The time was used by the Syracusans to their advantage and their fleet sailed out again against the Athenians who put out Eurymedon with 86 ships only to be defeated and slain. Eighteen Athenian ships were lost. The Syracusans began to close the mouth of the Great Harbour. Nicias moved from ship to ship exhorting his men to fight for their fatherland. Nicias took command of the army stretched along the shore and Demosthenes took out the last fleet. The Athenians were completely defeated and with sunset the dark waves of the sea were strewn with the wreckage of the Athenian ships. The living were too weary to look after the burial of the dead. 'Athens' sun was set'.

Athenian defeat: Athens' sunset

End of the Athenian fleet

Demosthenes suggested forcing their way at day-break. Nicias agreed, but sailors would not face the passage once again. They burnt some of their ships and the rest were towed away by the Syracusans. 'No single Athenian ship now rode upon the waters of that harbour into which Athens' fleet, Queen of the Western Seas, had sailed so proudly'.

3/Retreat of the Athenians: The Athenians—allies, soldiers, sailors and non-combatants now made for a retreat by land. The Syracusan general Hermocrates

ordered sealing off of the passage of retreat. But given to drinking and merry-making for the victory the Syracusans would not listen to orders. Hermocrates devised a stratagem. He sent a few horsemen who approaching near the Athenian camp posed as friends of the Athenian general and warned against stirring that night from the camp. Nicias and Demosthenes informed of it by the sentries believed in it and kept their men in the camp. They remained there on the day following. On the third morning when they began to move on retreat, Gylippus and his Syracusans lay crouched in waiting amid the hills. After several days' desperate attempt the Athenians found the hilly track impossible of being followed and they made for the sea. The vanguard was commanded by Nicias and the rear by Demosthenes. The rear was hotly pursued by the Syracusans, and Demosthenes and his men surrendered to Gylippus on an offer of bare life. On receiving information of Demosthenes' surrender, Nicias suggested terms to Gylippus but these were rejected. His attempt to begin march at night stealthily was detected and he had to fight every step of his retreat till he reached the deep Channel of Assinarus. Wound, hunger and thirst had maddened his followers. In their eagerness to quench thirst many were trampled under foot, many more carried away by current of the channel while the pitiless Syracusans rained missiles on them. Many lost their lives. To stop massacre of his men Nicias surrendered to Gylippus. The Spartans general now ordered stopping of the massacre. The surviving Athenians were escorted to Syracuse city. Of the forty thousand men that had begun the retreat, only with a few exception, all were killed or captured. Nicias and Demosthenes were at once put to sword despite Gylippus' attempt to save their lives. The captives were made slaves of the individual captors. About 7,000 were put into stone quarries at Syracuse to live the life of beasts of burden. The dead were heaped together to rot where these lay. 'Every kind of misery which could befall man in such

*Passages of
retreat
ordered to be
sealed*

*Demosthenes
surrenders*

*Nicias'
terms of
surrender
rejected*

*Bestial
treatment of
the captives*

a place befell them'. Torture and bestial treatment explained the Syracusan vengeance. Many years later some of these men returned home to narrate the story of the massacre and inhuman treatment received at Syracuse.

*Degrees of
responsibility*

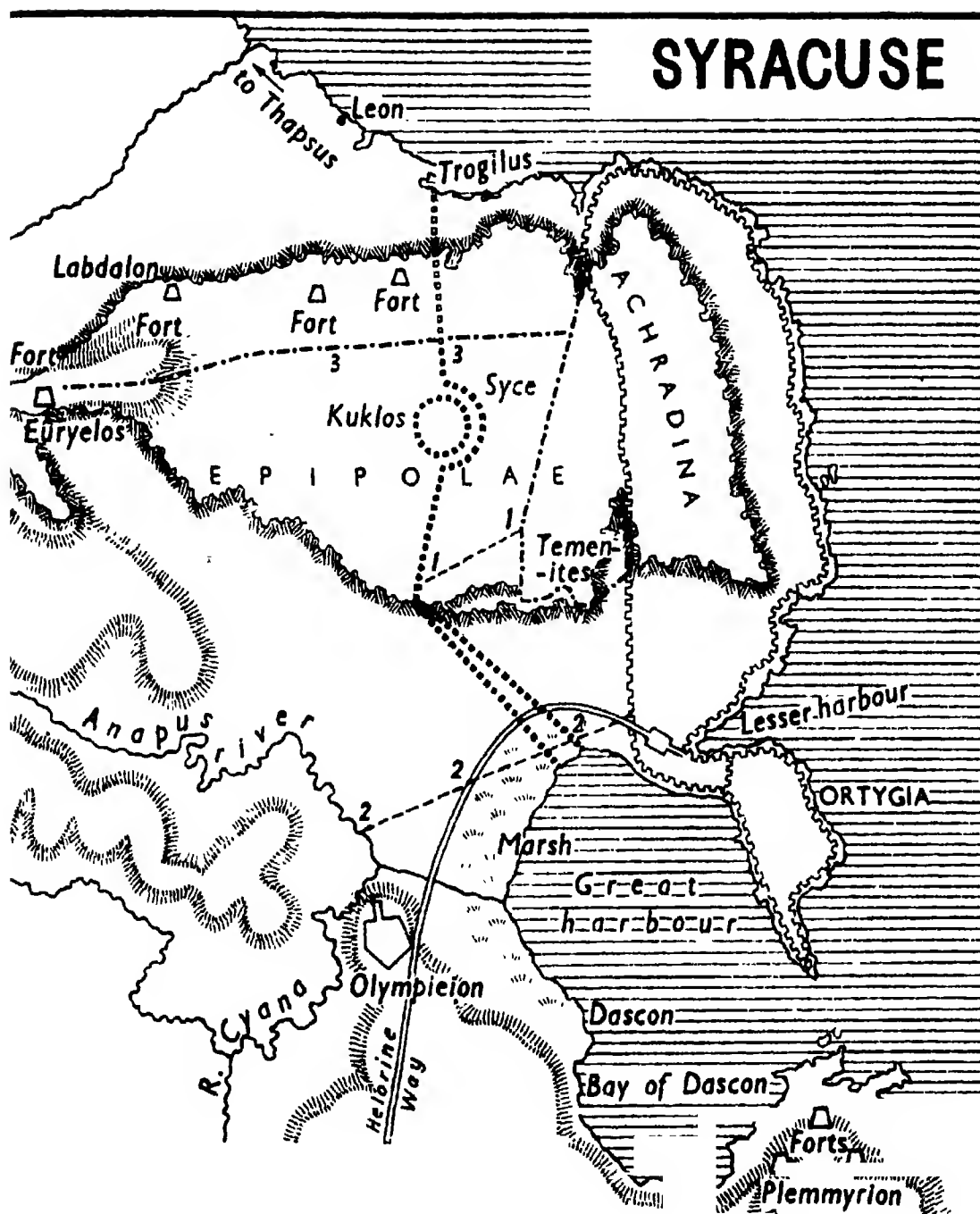
4/Responsibility for Sicilian Catastrophe: It is nearly impossible to fix the responsibility for the Sicilian disaster on any individual unilaterally, for there are degrees of responsibility for it. It will be fair to consider the question as a whole and apportion responsibility in reference to the contributions each one made to the disaster.

*Nicias'
unwillingness*

No fault can perhaps be seen in the Athenian people's being convinced by the arguments of Segesta for sending help, for in it they saw a practical opportunity of interference in the West. But in appointing Nicias, Alcibiades and Lamachus as leaders of the expedition they committed the mistake of dividing the command. Appointment of Nicias to the command against his will and even after his tireless effort in the Second Athenian Assembly to dissuade the people from sending the expedition by enlarging upon the magnitude of the armament for success of expedition, was indeed a folly. The Athenian Assembly gave Nicias and his fellow commanders a *carte blanche* to make the expedition of any size. No notice was taken of Nicias' offer to resign his own command. Here was the initial blunder committed by the Athenian people. But the Western policy of Alcibiades which held out the prospects of conquest of Greek Italy, Sicily, Carthage and the Carthaginian empire which would have made Athens the real Mistress of the Hellas, although seemed alluring, the Athenian people wanted to provide the expeditionary force with a brake. Nicias whom they trusted and whose cautious policy they knew well, was sent to work as the brake. Division of command might as well have been the result of such a psychology. Yet, for the success of an expedition unity of command was essential and the extent to which the

Alcibiades'

*Divided
command*



[facing page 272]

Athenian people failed to realise it, they were responsible for the catastrophe. For the evils of a divided command showed itself at Rhegium where the three commanders put forth three different plans and although that of Lamachus was the very best, it could not be followed which led to the acceptance of the second best plan given by Alcibiades.

The enemies of Alcibiades played their part in the disaster. They openly held Alcibiades responsible for the mutilation of the busts of Hermes and charged him for profanation of the *Mystery of Eleusis*. Despite Alcibiades' demand for immediate trial, nothing was done and the expedition was allowed to sail with the charge of profanation hanging on Alcibiades' head. The enemies of Alcibiades knew well that they had no hope of success when Alcibiades was in Athens, hence allowed the matter to wait for the moment which would be most convenient to them for trying Alcibiades. They actually succeeded in their plan and recalled Alcibiades in the midst of operations which justifiably angered him and he left for the enemy camp. It was his enmity towards his countrymen that led him to divulge the Athenian plan in Sicily and it was on his insistence that the Spartans agreed to send Gylippus to the assistance of the Syracusans. As to the question whether the expedition would succeed had Alcibiades been left undisturbed, writers like Henderson returns an affirmative answer. Recall of Alcibiades had taken away much of the strength of the expedition and the enemies profited by his divulging of the Athenian plan, hopes and expectations as also their fear.

*Mutilation
of the busts
of Hermes*

*Alcibiades'
recall:
His joining
the enemy
camp*

*Athenian
plan
divulged*

The expedition was also dogged by an evil star. Lamachus, the most capable and tried of the three generals fell fighting almost at the initial stage of the war. This removed the effectiveness of the expeditionary force.

Death of Lamachus and disappearance of Alcibiades left Nicias absolutely free to follow his own line

*Death of
Lamachus*

Gylippus'
arrival

of action. The building of the wall from Trogilus on the northern coast to the Great Harbour was his responsibility, but he did not try to complete it with the expedition it demanded and a small portion remained unfinished through which the Spartan commander Gylippus entered into the city. Further, although he had information of Gylippus' reaching Tarentum, he did not take steps to intercept him despite the time and strength he had at his command. He woke to the danger of the situation too late. It was due to Nicias' folly that reinforcement reached Syracuse just in time to save the city from surrender.

Nicias'
procrastina-
tion

Second
expedition
under
Eurymedon
and
Demosthenes

Folly of not
recalling
Nicias

In the winter when the inactive war-ships of Athens were rotting and crews were steadily losing heart, Nicias was himself sick and despondent, he appealed to the Athenians at home to send reinforcement or order recall of the expedition. The Athenians decided to send a second armada under Eurymedon and Demosthenes. Writers, particularly Freeman, have questioned the wisdom of the Athenians to send reinforcement even after knowing from Nicias that all Sicily was hostile to the Athenians. But Meyer thinks that Athenians acted rightly since retreat at this stage would have been nothing better than proclamation of bankruptcy. Henderson while approving of the Athenian decision to have one last try, holds Athenians responsible for the folly of keeping Nicias still in command. He thinks it to be not only a folly but sheer madness. Nicias' 'failures, his manifest incompetence, his piety, his sickness, his old age, his despair' should have, according to Henderson dictated a recall of Nicias. After all, his local knowledge and his engineering skill was not indispensable.

Nicias'
responsibility

While the Athenians cannot be exonerated from the responsibility for the Sicilian disaster, Nicias, the man on the spot must have to bear even greater share in it.

Apart from his sickness which might have added to his despondency, he failed miserably to perform his

most essential duty as a general, namely to look to the safety of his men. Even when Demosthenes' great attack had failed and all was lost on land, and Syracuse proved impregnable on land, Nicias refused to sail for home despite Demosthenes' suggestion for withdrawal. 'But Nicias, stubborn and selfish, refused to agree. Deceived or self-deceiving, he professed to believe that treachery in Syracuse might still deliver up the triumphant city into the hands of her routed enemy' (Henderson). He also did not agree to Demosthenes' second suggestion to leave the Great Harbour and to shift their station to Catana or Thapsus. Neither Demosthenes nor Eurymedon dared to override Nicias' decision, for they must have thought that the general had good reasons not to accept their suggestions. But Nicias was perhaps unwilling to accept their suggestion for no better reason than avoiding to face the wrath of his fellow citizens. This is what Thucydides ascribes to Nicias' refusal to sail for home.

Nicias' obstinate refusal to sail for home

Eurymedon and Demosthenes' suggestions rejected

Nicias dared not face his fellow citizens

After weeks of idle stay in the harbour when at last after ravaging sickness in the Athenian lines, Nicias belatedly and grudgingly bowed to the logic of fact, and consented to withdraw. On the night before the day of sailing for home there was an eclipse of the moon. Nicias, a man 'somewhat over much inclined to divination' decided, on the interpretation of the omen by the camp soothsayers to wait 'thrice nine days', i.e. till there was again a full-moon. The result was total disaster. Nicias' piety or superstition led to the massacre of his men and miserable end to himself and loathsome end of many in Syracusan quarries.

Nicias' superstition

Massacre of the Athenians

Needless to emphasise that the Athenians must share the major responsibility for the Sicilian disaster for appointing Nicias against his will, dividing the command between three generals, recalling Alcibiades at a crucial stage of the expedition and by not recalling the expedition. Prof. Bury considers that the madness of Athenian people was manifest not in their sending the expedition but in committing the same to

Athenian people's responsibility

*Real causes
of the failure
of the expedition*

Nicias instead of Demosthenes and then in recalling Alcibiades. All this was possible because of the peculiar nature of the Athenian Constitution and its working. An expedition of the kind sent to Sicily, if it were to depend for its execution on the popular assembly which might interfere with it for any purpose or any time, the expedition was bound to be mismanaged. Thucydides considers that the primary mistakes were political, not military. Yet Nicias, the man on the spot must be held not to a small extent responsible for the debacle. His half-heartedness in his plans, his dilatoriness in completing the wall thereby leaving it open for Gylippus to reach Syracuse, his incompetence in realising and deciding upon the need for withdrawal, his superstition and all that made him primarily responsible for the disaster. His piety and virtue did not, in fact could not, save him from the miserable end that he had met with.

*Nicias
primarily
responsible*

*Athenian
loss*

5/Consequences of Sicilian Disaster: Sicilian expedition was yet another step in the aggressive policy of Athens which had cost her the good will of the Greeks of every part. In the rash enterprise they lost their army, their fleet, flourishing vigour of their manly youth and the prudence of their experienced generals—a loss not only irreparable, but one that had disabled the Athenians to resist the confederacy of Peloponnesus and shook to the foundation the fabric of their empire. 'The neutrals bestirred themselves, islanders planned insurrection, the Lacedaemonian were jubilant, Persia was interested and the Athenians depressed.'

*Athenian
Empire's
foundation
shaken*

*Athens'
allies prepare
for a revolt*

In the year following the Athenian debacle in Sicily, the Spartans prepared a fleet of hundred sails. This was meant to encourage and support the revolt of the Asiatic Greek subjects of Athens. The Athenian allies, rather subjects, scattered over so many coasts and islands, prepared to assert their independence. The islands of Chios, Lesbos, and the city of Erythrae solicited Spartan naval support in their revolt against

Athens. Their request was enforced by Tissaphernes who promised to pay the sailors and victual the ships. At the same time ambassador from Cyzicus requested Spartan support for expelling the Athenian garrisons which they were compelled to admit. Persian Pharnabazus seconded their proposal and offered the same conditions as Tissaphernes.

*Persia comes
to assist
against
Athens*

Athens in the mean time, hard pressed for want of money was forced to use the reserve of 1,000 talents laid aside in more prosperous times. She fitted out a fleet which blockaded the Corinthian fleet which was proceeding towards Chios. Athens also laid waste Chios, blockaded the town, won back Lesbos and gained some success in Miletus. But in the mean time Cnidus rebelled and the Peloponnesians won a naval victory at Syme which was followed by the revolt of Rhodes. By the Spring of 411 Athens retained on the western coast of Asia, only Cos, Samos, Lesbos and Halicarnassus. What was worse, she was confronted by a strong Peloponnesian fleet strengthened all the more by the support given by Persia and Sicily. The Sicilian disaster thus not only removed the idea of Athenian naval invincibility and imperial strength, but introduced her old enemy Persia into the picture against her. Athenian navy was now equalled in strength by that of the enemy side.

*Economic
stress*

*Athenian
empire
depleted*

*Athens'
naval
invincibility
proved a
hoax*

The terror of such a formidable combination naturally reduced Athens to despair. Their disaster and disgrace in Sicily destroyed at once the real and ideal supports of their power. The loss of one-third of their citizens made it impossible to supply the depleted strength of garrisons with fresh recruits. Their multiplied defeats before the walls of Syracuse 'had converted into contempt that admiration in which Athens had long been held by Greeks and barbarians'.

*Difficulty in
supplying
garrisons
with fresh
recruits*

After the disaster, the Athenian slaves at Laurion escaped to Decelea which became an asylum for deserting slaves. Seizure of Decelea by Lacedaemonians

*Adverse effect
on her
revenue*

stopped one of the most important sources of revenue from the mines of Laurion and Athens had to sustain her coinage system by using the gold dedicated to gods as also by issuing copper coins thinly plated with silver. A very important change in the relationship of Athens and her tributaries was effected. Tribute was temporarily abolished and a tariff of 5 per cent. was levied on all imports and exports.

*Change in
administra-
tion: 'Probuli'*

Situation appeared dismal and it was generally felt that the Council of Five Hundred was no longer competent to conduct the city through such a crisis. A smaller body would be better suited to direct the affairs of the state. A Council of Ten called *Probuli* was entrusted with the chief direction of the affairs of the state. For the time being the Council of Five Hundred was superseded by the *Probuli*. The Athenian democracy found itself threatened from more sides than one. The *Probuli* was but a stop-gap and could do little to restore confidence in the administration although it included leaders like Sophocles and Hagnon. There were discontent and secret plotting. The moderates and the oligarchs, although with different ideas, were trying for the overthrow of democracy.

*Secret
plotting to
overthrow
democracy*

*Distress, fear
of the
Athenians*

*Athenians
critical of
their leaders
and institu-
tions*

*Commission
of Ten—
'Probuli'*

6/The Oligarchic Revolution in Athens: The Sicilian debacle convinced the Athenians that they had gambled away their safety in Sicily. Distress, fear and discontent that followed, as well as the pressure felt by the people have been set forth by Aristophanes in his comedy of *Lysistrata*. The Athenians in anger and desperation withdrew their support from those demagogues who advised the despatch of the expedition to Sicily. They were not only critical of their leaders but also of their institutions. In order that irresponsible advisers trying to outbeat one another might no longer sway the Council or the Assembly, they shifted the direction of the affairs of the state to a responsible commission of ten elderly men called *Probuli*. It was originally mooted as a war measure

and a means to recall Alcibiades. The latter was anxious to get the sentence of condemnation upon him revoked and return to Athens. But this could not happen so long as Athens continued to remain a democracy. Alcibiades proposed through the captains of the Athenian ships at Samos, who were friendly to him, that he might use his good offices in winning over Persia to Athens' cause, detach her from Spartan friendship and secure Persian gold for Athens on condition that Athens must change her democratic constitution since the Persian King would have no dealings with *villainous democracy*. This was the lever Alcibiades sought to use for his recall. Peisander at his suggestion came to Athens to plead for the return of Alcibiades who was condemned of profanation of holy *mysteries*. He met the arguments of the scruples of the pious men as well as the democrats by counter argument of the real chance of Persian aid and the safety that a man like Alcibiades could bring to the Athenians. Willy nilly the people agreed and Peisander was sent to clinch the bargain with the Persian satrap Tissaphernes.

Alcibiades' offer of Persian assistance on condition that Athenian democracy should be changed

People agreeable to a change

Before sailing Peisander bade the oligarchic clubs in Athens to work for the subversion of democracy. But Tissaphernes was not ready for an abrupt change of sides. Alcibiades' plan, insofar as it related to Persian assistance thus failed.

Tissaphernes unwilling to change sides

In the mean time, however, the extremists in Athens had carried out their plan far too advance for any withdrawal. To save their skin they must carry through the oligarchic revolution. The youthful conspirators had in the mean time assassinated Androcles, enemy of Alcibiades. A few others who were thought to be inconvenient to them were also done away with. The *moderates* led by Theramenes though opposed to oligarchy desired a change in the constitution. They felt that the foreign policy under democracy and men of education and knowledge, had no sufficient influence on the conduct of affairs. They

Extremists proceeded far with their plan

Moderates wanted a change in the constitution

therefore wanted a moderate polity which would be neither a democracy nor an oligarchy. Thus a change in the constitution was the goal both of the *moderates* and *extremists*, though with different ideas.

*Council of
Four
Hundred
replaces
Council of
Five
Hundred*

*Oligarchic
Revolution
accomplished*

*Democrats
at Samos in
revolt*

*Recall of
Alcibiades
to Samos*

The extremist leaders Antiphon, Peisander and Phrynichus found it desirable to enlist the support of the moderates. A special Assembly of the people was summoned to meet at the temple of Poseidon at Colonus outside the city walls. The Assembly abolished the existing magistracies and *Council of Five Hundred* and a new *Council of Four Hundred* with authority to summon another Five Thousand representatives whenever they pleased. The bigger body of Five Thousand was a sop to Theramenes and his *moderates*. The Four Hundred, oligarchs mostly, whose names were kept secret, now with the support of lusty band of young adherents entered the Council chamber of the Five Hundred and compelled the members of the Council of Five Hundred to retire. The Oligarchic Revolution was thus an accomplished fact and the Oligarchy of Four Hundred began to rule Athens. Even the oligarchs would not like the return of Alcibiades and they did not allow any of the oligarchs to return. Their high-handed rule only continued for three months when they were overthrown. The cause was that they did not count the democratic sentiments of the sailors stationed with the Athenian fleet at Samos.

In Samos, however, the new Constitution was not acceptable to the sailors of the Athenian fleet. They rose in their wrath, deposed all officers and voted their trusted democrats to the vacant offices, the most prominent of whom were Thasybulus and Thrasyllus. There was talk about the revolt in Samos, but factually true Athens, democratic Athens, existed only in Samos. They recalled Alcibiades to Samos and but for his restraint the fleet would have sailed against Athens. This would have been disastrous, for the enemies of Athens would have certainly seized this opportunity to humble Athens.

Peace overtures were made by the oligarchs to soften the feelings of the sailors at Samos but it was rejected with contempt. On Alcibiades' suggestion a counter offer was made demanding dismissal of the Council of Four Hundred and restoration of the old Council of Five Hundred although the Assembly of Five Thousand might be allowed to remain. But the extremists in Athens held power at the top and they began to construct a fort at Eetoneia ostensibly for conducting attack against the democratic fleet in Samos but in reality as a part of the conspiracy to deliver up the city to the Spartans in order that oligarchy might become permanent in Athens. Theramenes grew more and more impatient daily. Ultimately he and his associate Aristocrats stood up against oligarchy. Phrynichus an oligarch was struck down in the street in open daylight. This worked as a signal for a general rising against oligarchy. The Eetoneia fort was demolished and all moderates and democrats made a common cause against the oligarchs. An Assembly was immediately called on the demand of Theramenes and others. But as the Assembly was on the point of meeting, a Spartan fleet appeared in Athenian waters but left towards Euboea. The Athenians despatched a fleet of 36 ships under Thymochares to pursue the Spartan fleet. But the Athenian fleet was routed off Eretria. The Spartans could now blockade Piraeus if they had shown a little enterprise and compel the Athenian fleet at Samos to return home for saving the city and the entire Athenian empire would have fallen into the enemy hands. But they did not pursue their victory off Eretria.

*Demand of
change in the
constitution*

*Rising
against the
Oligarchs*

*Athenian
defeat at
Eretria*

*Sparta did
not pursue
her victory*

All this gave Theramenes to press for a change in the constitution. The people met, deposed the Council of Four Hundred and the *Constitution of the Five Thousand* was set up in its place. Two important principles, namely *Hoplite franchise* and *no pay for office* were adopted. The extremist leaders Antiphon and others were executed, the rest fled to Decelea.

*Council of
Four
Hundred
abolished:
Replaced by
Assembly of
Five
Thousand:
Other changes*

*Best
government*

'The government of the Five Thousand' says Thucydides 'in its early days was the best which the Athenians ever enjoyed within my memory. Oligarchy and Democracy were duly blended. Athens after the miserable state into which she had fallen, was able once again to raise her head'. Now at last Theramenes succeeded in getting a vote passed to bring back Alcibiades from exile. But he had left Samos avowing his intention to meet Tissaphernes.

*Recall of
Alcibiades**Character*

7/**Nicias**: Son of Niceratus, Nicias was a conservative, wealthy slave-owner with interests in the Laurion silver mine. Bitterly opposed to demagogues like Cleon, Nicias was out of sympathy with political and intellectual progress of Athens. At the time when Cleon was swaying the Athenian people, Nicias enjoyed their love and confidence. Nicias' incorruptibility, high respectability and his knowledge of military affairs gave him an abiding influence over the Athenians. Yet his abilities were those of a mediocrity and never equal to those of a leader or a statesman. He was a believer in peace policy and was in favour of a soft policy towards Sparta for which he was regarded as a follower of Cimon. Given to superstition and too much divination, he proved sometimes a serious block to quick action. His correct place was in conducting of religious ceremonies and he spared no expense in the religious service of the state. His pacific nature was manifest in his relinquishing of command in favour of Cleon as leader of the expedition to Pylos. Cleon's success put Nicias' reputation at stake to retrieve which he led an army into Corinthian territories and gained partial victory at Solygea and occupied and garrisoned Methone. Next year he occupied Cythera. Methone and Cythera were most important Athenian possessions, besides Pylos, in the Peloponnesus.

*Policy and
aims**Achievements*

In the Battle of Mantinea, the Argives, despite imploringly begging for Athenian help, Nicias did not render any. This has been rightly criticised specially by Busolt as 'one of Nicias' gravest political sins'.

Nicias had to save his ostracism for this, by allying himself with his political opponent Alcibiades, and Hyperbolus became the scape-goat. Nicias' policy of preserving the official peace with Sparta cost two hundred Athenian lives and as if 'the Battle of Mantinea had not broken it officially'!

His folly

The rapprochement between pious and punctilious Nicias and profane and unstable Alcibiades looked rather unusual. Yet, there were positive signs that Nicias was roused from his inactivity and he undertook an expedition against Chalcidice. He, however, failed in his attempt on Amphipolis but succeeded in conquering Melos which was colonised by the Athenians.

Conquest of Melos

Nicias came to the fullest view in the affairs of the Sicilian expedition. He was opposed to the sending of the expedition to Sicily and argued his point of view setting forth the enormous cost and largeness of the size of the expedition to ensure success. The discreet counsels of Nicias, whose caution was wisdom did not impress the Athenian people who elated by success at Melos voted not only for sending the expedition to Sicily but also Nicias as one of the commanders. To Nicias' regret he and his colleagues were given a *carte blanche* to make the expedition of any size they thought fit. It was criminal on the part of Nicias to have made the Athenians commit an unusually large amount and armament to be sent to Sicily, the loss of which had been disastrous to Athens and her empire. Nicias must have thought that the people would be dissuaded by hearing the large cost involved. But while it did not have the desired effect on the Athenian people, proved disastrous in the end. The appointment of Nicias as one of the three commanders was indeed some respect shown to him, but it was no policy. Henderson observes, Nicias was sent to act as a check on all rashness that was very much likely from Alcibiades. 'The Athenians thought that their expeditionary machine needed a brake'. But

Appointed one of three in command

*A check to rashness—
but effects*

*Unsuited for
the conduct
of an enter-
prise of
conquest*

Henderson humourously also remarks that 'He was in fact a most excellent drag on the wheel and sent the whole machine in due course into the ditch'. After all, the fact remains that Nicias, although capable of following *Periclean strategy* which Athens had so long been following, 'his ability and temperament were wholly unsuited for the conduct of an enterprise of conquest demanding bolder and greater operations'.

*Plan of no
hazard*

In the War Council held at Rhegium, counsel was divided, and Nicias true to his opposition to the sending of the expedition suggested giving up of the enterprise or following a course which involved risking and doing as little as possible—to sail about, making some demonstrations, securing anything that could be secured without trouble, and giving any help that could be done without danger. Of the three plans suggested by the three commanders, Nicias' was the worst and that of Lamachus the best. Nicias' plan was 'politics, not war'. Eventually, however, the plan of Alcibiades was accepted.

*Neglect of
building the
wall*

When the recall of Alcibiades and death of Lamachus left Nicias in sole charge of the expedition, his incapacity to deal with the situation became very clear. His dilatoriness to complete the wall up to the northern shore, which would have cut off Syracuse from outside contacts and place her at the mercy of the Athenian navy, let in Gylippus whose presence brought a new confidence in the Syracusans. The two rival armies competed in completing wall and the cross wall but the Syracusans prevailed and the Athenian wall did not reach the northern coast. The Syracusans built their cross wall to reach Euryalus and four forts were built on the western part of the hill thereby hindered any help from reaching the Athenians. The Athenians succeeded in occupying Plemmyrion and established three stations for their ships. But with the setting of winter the Athenians were buffeted by rough sea-wind in inhospitable shores where they established their stations. The Athenians who were besiegers be

*Cooped up
in inhospita-
ble shores*

came now besieged. Such was the result of gross neglect of Nicias.

Nicias appealed to the home government for reinforcement or failing that to recall the expedition. The letter in which he made such appeals made a pathetic reading. The situation was made worse by the sickness of Nicias himself. The Athenian people sent a second expedition under Eurymedon and Demosthenes, but committed the folly of not superseding Nicias in command.

*Appeal for
reinforce-
ments*

In the mean time, as the news of the second expedition reached Syracuse, the Syracusans saw their chance in attacking the Athenian wall by land and their naval stations by sea. It was a divided success, the Syracusan attack on the wall was beaten off while on the sea they won a complete victory over the Athenians. The reinforcements under Eurymedon and Demosthenes reached too late in the same day after the battles were over. A fruitless attempt was made by Demosthenes on the Syracusan cross wall and seeing no profit in lingering in the Syracusan shores, he suggested immediate withdrawal. But 'Nicias stubborn and selfish, refused to agree. Deceived or self-deceiving he professed to believe that treachery in Syracuse might still deliver up the city into the hands of the routed enemy'. This was no sign of wisdom on the part of Nicias. Even Eurymedon and Demosthenes' second suggestion of leaving the Great Harbour for Catana or Thapsus was not agreed to by Nicias. No sound reason could be found for Nicias' stubborn refusal to leave the inhospitable shores when all hopes were lost. Thucydides has ascribed one motive in Nicias' unwillingness to listen to sane advice. 'Home he dared not return, to face the wrath of fellow citizens'.

*Second
expedition
under
Eurymedon
and
Demosthenes*

*Advice of
immediate
withdrawal
unheeded*

After lingering for weeks when sickness began ravaging the Athenian stations 'the obstinate selfishness of an ailing stubborn fool kept upon that hostile shore what still was a great fleet and a great army, which

*Belated
decision to
withdraw*

had they returned, would yet have saved their city against her bitterest foes'. In the mean time Gylippus collected more reinforcements. And when Nicias grudgingly and belatedly yielded to the logic of facts and consented to withdraw the expedition, a lunar eclipse upset the whole programme. Relying on the divination of the soothsayers Nicias no less superstitious than his men postponed departure till full-moon. Another twenty-seven days they were to stay. Here he failed to discharge the elementary duty of a general. Safety of his men should have been his prime consideration.

*Superstition
holds him
back*

Disaster

The Syracusans used the time fully and sailed out with 76 ships and the Athenian with 86 ships and Eurymedon in command put out against them only to be defeated and Eurymedon himself killed in action. Nicias now exhorted his men to fight for the fatherland. He took command of the army himself on the shore and Demosthenes took out the last fleet. But the struggle ended with Athenian defeat. Nicias now consented to retreat by sea, since retreat by land was hopeless. But the sailors would not face the enemy ships for a retreat. The Athenian burnt some of their boats and the Syracusan towed the rest away.

*Agreed to
withdraw*

*Retreat by
land:
Miserable
end*

The retreat began with Nicias in the van, to be killed in enemy hands. Nicias' death is bound to draw our pity but perhaps no sympathy. Even holding the Athenian people primarily responsible for the Sicilian debacle, it is difficult to exonerate Nicias from the responsibility for the disaster. True to his conscience and conviction, he should have declined the appointment as one of the three commanders of the expedition, as he actually had one when expedition against Pylos was sent. *Further*, by over-emphasising the need for large armaments for the success of the expedition he had caused the ruin of the Athenian navy. *Lastly*, his inexplicable unwillingness to accept Demosthenes' advice to abandon the expedition was certainly to avoid the danger of facing the Athenian

*Responsibility for the
debacle*

people, hence was his policy of procrastination. For all this Nicias, the man on the spot, must share a major portion of the responsibility for the debacle.

8/Alcibiades: Son of Cleinias, Alcibiades was brilliant in his intellect, unrivalled in his political foresight and was endowed by nature with extraordinary beauty and talents, and by fortune with wealth and high birth. He was 'the most perplexing, and the most mishandled of all Athenian statesmen'. He was naturally a man of strong passions but his ruling passion was an ambition to contend and overcome. His ambition was to rule, and not in Athens alone. He had been brought up under the supervision of his relative Pericles but this did not prevent him from leading the dissolute life of a spoiled young man of fashion. He had closest intimacy with Socrates, for he could with his penetrative intellect evaluate, the genius of Socrates and attached himself to him rejecting the rich and great who sued for his favour. He was famed for his breed of horses and in Olympic games he sent seven chariots and won three prizes including the first and second. This brought honour not only to him but for his city as well in whole of Greece. Prof. Bury remarks that Alcibiades 'had not in him the stuff of which true statesmen are made; he had not the purpose, the perseverance and self-control. An extremely able and dexterous politician he certainly was, but he wanted the balance which a politician, whether scrupulous or unscrupulous must have in order to be a great statesman'. His family connections brought him into the democratic war party, but he was no true democrat. He had no real sympathy with advanced democracy and democratic party whose cause he championed.

*Character
and early
life*

*No true
democrat*

It was in very young age that Alcibiades first applied himself to the services of the Athenian republic and yet immediately he proved his superiority to others, specially in oratory. He dazzled the imagination of his fellow-citizens and delighted their eyes by his personal charm. As a military talent he was

*His early
exploits:
His ideas
about the
Peace of
Nicias*

unrivalled. Alcibiades was chosen strategos in 420 B.C. which was very much welcome to the radical party for he had the military training to perform the duties of strategos. He had already come into the front, fought in the trenches outside Potidaea. At Deluim he served in the cavalry. But it was at the time of the Peace of Nicias that he came to the front as a politician. He did not believe that the peace would endure long. He mistrusted the peace and looked on Sparta with deadly hatred. It was his clear-sightedness that gave him superiority to Nicias who always shut his eyes to facts.

*Alcibiades'
Argive
policy*

Upon his choice as the strategos in preference to Nicias, a change in Athenian policy began. Athens entered into an alliance with Argos. In his Argive policy, Alcibiades was following Cleon's idea. Alcibiades saw that with the Argive army waiting on the flank, Spartan army would not dare cross the isthmus of Corinth into Attica. With Athens standing firmly behind the Argives, the latter might become more than a match for the Spartans in the field. Thereby while Sparta would be compelled to fight for the existence of her home, Attica would remain untouched. 'Alliance with Argos was Athens' great new hope. If war was bound to come again, Alcibiades' *Argive policy* was a masterpiece alike of statesmanship and of strategy', remarks Henderson. The way in which Alcibiades secured the alliance with Argos, has been a matter of criticism and denounced as a *discreditable trick*. Yet it must be said to the credit of Alcibiades that in the face of Nicias' pro-Spartan contentions in the Assembly and Sparta's increasing unfriendliness the alliance with Argos, Elis and Mantinea was an imperative necessity, and some writers consider it a brilliant example of Alcibiades' political talent.

*Alliance
with Argos,
Elis and
Mantineia
(July, 420
B.C.)*

In the Epidaurian War that followed Athens sided with Argos against Epidaurus (419 B.C.). Sparta declared for and assisted Epidaurus. But in 418 B.C. Nicias was elected strategos for the people had refused to

re-elect adventurous Alcibiades. This had its inevitable effect on the Athenian policy and although alliance with Argos, Elis and Mantinea was not broken off, there was a change in the policy towards Sparta. In the Battle of Mantinea Athens under Nicias failed to do its duty towards Argos. Athens sent only 1,000 to the battle and another 1,000 arrived when the battle was lost. This criminal negligence can be ascribed to one man, and it was Nicias, whose heart was not in the campaign, who hated Alcibiades and his Argive policy. Alcibiades' Argive policy received its burial on the battlefield of Mantinea. Argos joined Spartan alliance and Mantinea, Elis and Achaean towns went over to the victor. Had Alcibiades' policy of assisting Argos against Sparta been followed, the fate of the Battle of Mantinea would have been otherwise.

*Nicias
defeats
Alcibiades'
Argive
policy in the
Battle of
Mantineia*

In the next year (418-17 B.C.) a vote of Ostracism was proposed by Hyperbolus, to remove Nicias for not effectively supporting Argos. But Alcibiades also had his enemies. Alcibiades and Nicias—two opponents, therefore, came to a compromise and all the followers of Nicias and Alcibiades wrote the name of Hyperbolus who was exiled for the ten years.

*Compromise
between
Nicias and
Alcibiades*

Baffled in his first strategy of offence against Sparta through alliance with Argos, Alcibiades had still another to propose. Appeals from Athenian allies at Sicily against tyrant city of Syracuse offered him the opportunity of turning his thoughts westwards, to Italy, to Sicily, and to Carthage and to making Athens the real Mistress of the Hellas. In the mean time the number of Alcibiades' adherents increased in Athens and when the question of rendering assistance to Segesta was broached in the Athenian Assembly youthful enthusiasts supported the war policy of Alcibiades in preference to Nicias' policy of peace and caution. Sicilian expedition was decided on but Nicias, the man of peace was appointed as one of the three commanders to work as a brake in the wheel of Alcibiades. But Alcibiades' enemies chose the moment of

*Sicilian
expedition
and
Alcibiades*

the departure of the expedition as most suited to blame him for profanation of *Mysteries* as also for the mutilation of the busts of Hermes. Alcibiades' demand for his immediate trial went unheeded and he had to sail with the charge hanging upon him.

Alcibiades' plan

Recall of Alcibiades—his taking asylum in Sparta

In the War Council held at Rhegium on receipt of the intelligence that Segesta was incapable of paying the cost of the expedition, Alcibiades got his plan of waiting for enlisting as many Sicilian cities into Athenian alliance, carried. This was due to his persuasive eloquence. Naxos and Catana were won over. The Athenian fleet made a naval demonstration in the Great Harbour of Syracuse and captured a ship. When Alcibiades was in the midst of operations, his enemies succeeded in inducing the Assembly to recall him to stand his trial for profanation. Alcibiades anticipating sure condemnation, disappeared and arrived at Sparta where he threw his energy into the ruining of the expedition as he did for organising it. It was on his suggestion that a Spartan general Gylippus was sent to Syracuse. The secrets of the Athenian plan were divulged by him and this had contributed to a large extent to the failure of the expedition. At Sparta Alcibiades invented a new theory of patriotism by remarking that 'He is the true patriot, not who, when exiled, refrains from attacking his country, but who in the warmth of his longing for her seeks to recover her without regard to the means. The country which I am now attacking is not my country. It is only my country when I have recovered her.'

When after the Sicilian debacle there was distress, fear and discontent, the oligarchs began secret plotting for the overthrow of democracy. The *moderates* also wanted a change—some sort of a new polity based on restricted franchise. Alcibiades who wished to return to Athens opened negotiations with Athenian officers at Samos promising to secure an alliance with Tissaphernes but demanding abolition of democracy as a pre-condition. For, the Persians would not agree to any

alliance with abhorrent democracy. Alcibiades, however, failed to keep his promise which was more than he could perform. But in the mean time there was constitutional change in Athens. But the Athenian leaders would not like the return of Alcibiades, then a fugitive at the court of Tissaphernes from Sparta due to King Agis' wrath because of Alcibiades' illicit relation with his wife. Here in Tissaphernes' court Alcibiades rendered incalculable service to his own country. As Athens and Sparta were face to face for a final show down, 147 Phoenician ships under Tissaphernes' disposal lay in waiting in the Mediterranean. As Thucydides points out, if Tissaphernes, ally and paymaster of Sparta wanted to finish the war between Athens and Sparta, he could have done so by giving the Spartans the victory with the help of his fleet. But Alcibiades had gained Tissaphernes' favour both by his personal charm and intelligence, and advised the satrap not to help any side and so let the Greeks wear out one another and thereby make it easy for Persia to conquer an exhausted Greece. Thus was Athens saved. When the rival fleet fell out, the victory was with Athens. The Oligarchic Revolution served Athens well. It had recalled Alcibiades who joined Theramenes, Thrasybulus and Thrasyllus at the eleventh hour to win the day for Athens. Party bitterness reared its ugly head not long after and 'dashed the cup of victory from her (Athens') lips for ever'.

*Services of
Alcibiades
to Athens,
in exile*

*Athens'
victory over
Sparta*

That Alcibiades was a man more sinned against than sinning goes without saying. His ambition was unbounded no doubt, but in ability and intellect, in generalship and statesmanship he was unrivalled. He anticipated matters which came to be realised later in time. 'He was an Alexander in the wrong, place as Athens was premature Macedonia.' Henderson and other writers of his opinion feel that if Alcibiades had been left in his command the expedition to Sicily, he would have indubitably captured Syracuse. As to the question whether the Sicilian expedition was

*Alcibiades
more sinned
against
than sinning*

justified from Athenian interests, it must be said that it was a policy of Alcibiades' willful ambitions. 'It had no shadow of moral justification.' After all, Alcibiades sought to rule more than Athens.

*His
unrequited
service to his
country*

But to the question whether he was treacherous, we feel like returning a negative answer. For, no sane man would have courted voluntary arrest and was sure to escape to safety as Alcibiades had done. His conduct in divulging the secrets of Athenian plans and positions was more vindictive than treacherous. This was requited by him later when he dissuaded Tissaphernes from siding with the Spartans. Despite all his faults, it must be said that no Greek statesman had been so rudely treated as was Alcibiades. Despite his reckless ways and his sins against his state, 'Alcibiades did service to his city equalled by no other man since the death of Pericles and would yet have brought her victorious out of the furnace of the war had he been permitted by his political enemies. His service was but ill requited'. 'The whole career of Alcibiades is its explanation.'

*Battle of
Cynossema
(411 B.C.):
Athenian
victory*

9/End of the War: The newly established *Polity* or Moderate Democracy at Athens gave a fairly tempered government to the people. In the mean time the Spartan admiral Astyochus had been superseded by Mindarus and the Peloponnesian fleet, invited by Pharnabazus, the Persian satrap sailed for the Hellespont, where cities were already in revolt against Athens (411 B.C.). Abydos and Lampsachus were won over by the enemy side and Athenians under Strombichides recovered Lampsachus but Abydos remained in Spartan and Persian hands. The Athenian fleet of seventy-six ships under Thrasybulus and Thrasyllus followed and forced the Lacedaemonian fleet to fight in the strait. The result was hard fighting and repulse of the Peloponnesians near the cape of *Cynossema*. This victory heartened the Athenians who immediately recovered Cyzicus which had revolted. Mindarus sent for the Lacedaemonian squadron that lay in

Euboean waters, but buffeted by storm and rude-sea only a few reached him, others were lost. All this was followed by another Athenian success at Abydos. The Athenian success was looked upon with great dissatisfaction by Tissaphernes and when soon after, Alcibiades paid him a visit he was arrested. But Alcibiades made good his escape.

*Success at
'05*

Pharnabazus came forward with vigorous support for the Peloponnesians and when in the Spring of 410 B.C. Mindarus laid siege of Cyzicus, Pharnabazus supported him with army. In the Battle of *Cyzicus*, fought both by land and sea the Athenians were victorious and Mindarus was slain in action, about sixty of their ships were sunk. Sparta was compelled, in the circumstances to sue for peace on the basis of *status quo ante*. The peace overtures were rejected by the Athenians for it did not include restoration of Athenian power in the Aegean and Asia Minor. The victory of Cyzicus enthused them and there was confidence that Athens would surely succeed in recovering the Aegean and Asia Minor notwithstanding the support to the enemy given by Pharnabazus.

*Battle of
Cyzicus
(410 B.C.)
Athenian
victory*

The Athenian victory at Cyzicus restored confidence in democracy, for it was won by the democratic navy. The *polity* of Theramenes was upset and democracy was restored on the basis of universal franchise and *Council of Five Hundred* of Cleisthenic Constitution. The most prominent leader of the change was Cleophon, a man of the same class as Hyperbolus and Cleon and endowed with same order of talent. Payment for office which was one of the most characteristic parts of the Athenian democracy was resumed as a matter of course. A new payment of *two obols* was instituted by Cleophon, the nature of which was not very clear. It is supposed by some that, it was a disbursement intended to relieve the economic pressure on the poor citizens due to protracted war. To give work to the poor, public works was another form of relief Cleophon

*Restoration
of Demo-
cracy*

*New temple
for Athena*

arranged for. A new temple for *Athena*, though less magnificent than the Parthenon, which was the true centre of the goddess' worship, was built.

*Athens
recovers her
position to a
large extent*

New enthusiasm in Athens was manifest in Athenian operations in the Black sea area and its neighbourhood. Under the able leadership of Alcibiades Athens began to regain her lost ground. Thasos and Selymbria were won back, Chrysopolis was occupied, Colophon was recovered and Byzantium was starved into submission. Bosphorus was again commanded by Athens, but she lost Pylus to Sparta and Nisaea to the Megarians.

*Sparta
combines
with Persia
against
Athens*

10/Persia's part in the Peloponnesian War:
Downfall of Athens: The last eight years, 412 to 405 B.C. saw the most unexpected combination of Persia, the common enemy of Greece with Sparta, the victor of Plataea against Athens the victor of Salamis. Lovers of Panhellenic ideals saw the sight with shock and disarray; it was in the nature of suicide for the Hellas.

*Persian
satraps
Tissaphernes
and
Pharnabazus
find the
moment
opportune
for recovering
Asiatic
Greek
dominions*

Sicilian catastrophe roused Persia from her many years' slumber with regard to Greece. Persia now staged a come back into the sphere of politics of Hellas. Satrap Tissaphernes of Sardis and Pharnabazus, satrap of Phrygia felt that time had come for wresting from Athens her Asiatic dominions. Persian interference began with her backing Chios with support in her planned revolt against Athens. The Persian satraps thought that the best way to drive Athens out of her Asiatic dominion was to stir up revolt in close alliance with Athens' sworn enemy Sparta. Both the satraps vied with each other to draw Sparta into such a profitable alliance and sent emissaries to Sparta, Pharnabazus urging action in Hellespont and Tissaphernes backing appeal of Chios. Alcibiades who had been then at Sparta advocated Chian cause and carried the day.

In 412 B.C. rebellion against Athens actively began

with the arrival of few Spartan ships in support of Chios. Combined fleet of Sparta and Chios, excited revolt in Teos, Miletus and Lebedos. Mytilene and Methymna, Cyme and Phocaea followed suit. The Chian people, according to Thucydides knew moderation in prosperity but their action in revolt, though may seem as imprudence, was undertaken only when many brave allies agreed to share the peril with them and after the Athenians themselves had confessed that affairs in Athens were hopelessly bad. Whatever error of judgment they had made, it was due to a common belief that the Athenian power would be easily and speedily overthrown.

*Revolt of
Chios,
Teos,
Miletus,
Lebedos,
Cyme,
Methymna,
Mytilene,
etc.*

*Common
notion about
Athens'
weakness*

Anti-Athenian revolt succeeded well and by the treaty of Miletus between Sparta and Persia on the one hand and Miletus on the other Sparta, 'sold to the barbarian the freedom of her fellow Greeks of Asia'. Persia demanded arrears of tributes from these Greek cities for well-nigh seventy years. On simple payment of the wages of Spartan sailors and victualling them so long as war with Athens continued, Sparta recognised by the treaty the right of Persia to all dominions which belonged to the Great Kings for generations. It has been suggested by Prof. Bury that Sparta then needed money and had no intention of faithfully carrying out the terms of the treaty and hoped to rescue the Asiatic Greek cities in the end. But what remained a mournful, dishonourable fact was that 'the treaty of Miletus opened up a new path in Greek politics, which was to lead the Persian King to the position of arbiter of Hellas'.

*Treaty of
Miletus*

*Sparta sells
Greek
independence
to Persia
for money*

Alcibiades who had in the mean time lost the sympathy of the Spartan King Agis for illicit relation with Agis' wife was compelled to leave Sparta with his life and took asylum in the court of Persian satrap Tissaphernes where he began to plan for his return to Athens. While at the court of Tissaphernes, Alcibiades set himself to dissolve the Perso-Spartan alliance for which he had done much. In his machinations for

*Alcibiades'
machination
for return
to Athens*

staging a return to Athens he suggested change of the democratic constitution in order to ensure Persian gold and friendship as against Sparta.

*Difference
between
Sparta and
Persia*

*Alcibiades'
effort for a
Perso-
Athenian
alliance*

*Athenian
victories*

*Pharnabazus'
massive help
to Sparta:
Athens
victorious*

Darius

*Cyrus placed
in charge of
Greek affairs*

*Cyrus
intervenes*

Difference arose between Persia and Sparta and Lichas the Spartan commissioner denounced the clause of the Treaty of Miletus, which gave Persia all the countries that had been held by her before. This would mean restoration of Persian dominion over Thessaly and other parts of Northern Greece. Lichas pressed for a new treaty. This was eventually agreed to by Tissaphernes and Persian claim was limited to Asiatic dominions. Even at the moment of near rupture between Sparta and Persia, Alcibiades could not persuade Tissaphernes to enter into any treaty with Athens. The war went on between Athens and Sparta in the mean time, and Athens won resounding victories in the battle of Cynossema. Satrap Tissaphernes was supremely discontented at Athenian success. Pharnabazus who was vying with Tissaphernes for recovery of the Asiatic Greek dominions, now started giving massive support to the Peloponnesians against Athens. The venue of war was chiefly Hellespont. But Sparta's able general Mindarus was defeated in a hard fought battle both by land and sea at Cyzicus despite Pharnabazus' financial support. With great enthusiasm and renewed vigour Athens began recovering Thasos, Colophon and occupying Chrysopolis. Athens was again in command of the Bosphorus. Pharnabazus, realised that Athens was not an exhausted power as she was commonly believed to have been. King Darius knew well of the jealousy between the two satraps Tissaphernes and Pharnabazus and thought that it was hindering the pursuance of any effective policy in the west. He put his son Cyrus at the place of Tissaphernes, with jurisdiction over Phrygia (Pharnabazus' satrapy), Cappadocia and Lydia. With the coming of Cyrus the course of the war took a new turn.

Cyrus took up his task in right earnest and began intervening in the war actively. But payment of gold

and victualling the Peloponnesian sailors would have failed his purpose had not Lysander, an really able commander been appointed as admiral. Lysander by his inordinate ambition and unrivalled ability soon gained the love and confidence of his men. His care for his men while ensured faithful obedience to his orders, his incorruptibility and absolute immunity against temptation made him respected by Cyrus, upon whom his influence soon became great. Despite his incorruptibility Lysander was most unscrupulous in the pursuit of his aims. To him end justified the means, and he was not only an able general but a skilful diplomatist as well.

*Lysander
appointed
Spartan
admiral*

In the meantime Alcibiades had returned to Athens after about eight years of exile and was put in sole charge of the war as strategos. Soon after in the Battle of Notion Lysander defeated and captured fifteen Athenian ships. This led to Alcibiades' unpopularity, for the Athenians in appointing him in supreme command expected victory in every engagement, whether he was present in it or not. Conon was appointed in supreme command of the navy to replace Alcibiades (406 B.C.). In the same year 140 strong Peloponnesian navy under Callicratidas who replaced Lysander as admiral, began to carry everything before it. The situation soon turned desperate, and Athens melted her gold in temples to meet the cost of new armament. 'Freedom was promised to slaves, citizenship to resident aliens, for their services in the emergency.' A great naval battle was fought near the islets of Arginusae (406 B.C.) in which despite largeness of the Peloponnesian fleet, the Athenians won the day, with seventy Spartan ships sunk. Athens also lost twenty-five ships with their crews, many of whom who were floating on the wreckage of the ships might have been saved. For this neglect on the part of the commanders the eight generals who were present in the battle were condemned to death and their property was confiscated. Thrasyllus and Pericles, son of the great statesman,

*Alcibiades
supreme*

*Battle of
Notion
(406 B.C.):
Alcibiades
replaced by
Conon*

*Lysander
replaced by
Callicratidas
as admiral*

*Battle of
Arginusae
(406 B.C.)*

*Athenians
won the day
with great
loss:
Neglect on
the part of
commanders
—Eight
condemned
to death*

along with four others were executed, but two of the condemned generals kept away from Athens and saved themselves.

*Lysander
reappointed
as real
commander
under a
nominal
admiral*

*Cyrus puts
Lysander
in charge of
the satrapy*

*Lampsacus
taken by
Lysander*

*Alcibiades'
counsel*

*Dangerous
position of
the Athenians*

Defeated and weakened, Spartans made peace overtures once again as they did four years back. But in the flush of victory Athens rejected the peace overtures. Nothing was left to the Spartans but to reorganise their fleet. Peloponnesian defeat had the effect of drying up the source of supply of money from Persia and it was felt by the Spartans that in order to pursue the war more effectively and thereby receive Persian support, Lysander must be restored to the command. But law did not permit this and to obviate the difficulty Lysander was put under a nominal admiral, although real powers were left with him. Lysander visited Cyrus and reviving his old influence brought the money subsidy as required. News arrived of Darius' illness and death was expected to come shortly. Cyrus left his satrapy and the tribute from the Asiatic dominions in charge of Lysander with whom a friendship had been developed and went for his father's bedside. All this was god send. Lysander at once used the resources to prove his ability. He avoided a naval engagement with Conon, held counsel with King Agis and began operations in the Hellespont where he laid siege of Lampsacus. The Athenian fleet, 180 strong followed Lysander to Lampsacus but was too late. But the Athenians proceeded to Aegospotami where they endeavoured to lure Lysander to a battle. Alcibiades who noticed the dangerous position of the Athenians from his castle nearby where he was putting up, counselled the generals to move to Sestos, but his advice was cold-shouldered. On the fifth day of their waiting when the Athenians spread themselves on the shore for meals, the entire Peloponnesian squadron numbering 200 ships swooped upon them. There was practically no battle at Aegospotami. 160 Athenian ships were captured by the Peloponnesians, twenty ships escaped. All the Athenians were taken prisoners,

three thousand of whom were put to death. It is generally believed that Adcimantus, one of the Athenian generals who were taken prisoners and spared, had been bribed by Lysander and treachery led to such a catastrophe. 'Never was a decisive victory gained with such small sacrifice as that which Lysander gained at Aegospotami.'

*Battle of
Aegospotami
won without
a fight:
Treachery
in Athenian
camp*

The situation at Athens naturally became desperate, the Athenians now could see that the prospect of sustaining themselves in a very probable siege by the Peloponnesian navy, now that by a sudden stroke Athenian sea power had been completely annihilated. But Lysander's plan was not to attack Athens but to starve her to surrender. He drove all the Athenian cleruchs, i.e. colonists, whom he found in the islands to Athens and thereby swelled the number of the starving Athenians. After subjugating the Athenian empire in the Hellespont and Thrace, Lysander entered the Saronic Gulf with 150 ships, occupied Aegina and laid siege of Piraeus. Simultaneously Spartan kings (there were two kings simultaneously according to Spartan constitution) Agis and Pausanias entered Attica, but finding the walls too strong to attack and winter setting in, they withdrew. But the siege of Piraeus continued. Athens offered to be ally of Lacedaemon and relinquish her empire as terms of peace. But the Spartans demanded demolition of the Long Walls, in addition. But Athenians did not see the need for accepting the condition and avoiding the eventuality of an unconditional surrender. Theramenes, in order to gain time visited Lysander, ostensibly to obtain more favourable terms for peace. But when he returned after about three months he found the Athenians ready to accept any terms for peace. People were dying of starvation and their wrath fell on Cleophon who was condemned to death for avoiding military service. Theramenes was sent to Sparta, with full powers to negotiate for peace. In the Assembly of the Peloponnesian allies at Sparta, the general

*Situation at
Athens
desperate*

*Lysander's
strategy*

*Piræus
besieged:
Agis and
Pausanias
in Attica*

*Athens'
peace
overtures*

*Spartas'
counter offer*

*Athens
ready to
surrender on
any terms*

*Peloponne-
sian
confederacy
demanded
destruction
of Athens*

*Sparta rose
to the
occasion :
Athens
saved*

sentiment was to utterly destroy Athens.* But Sparta, despite all her faults, could on occasions rise to nobler heights. She rejected the proposal of the confederates and would not agree to blot out the city that had played a noble part in times of peril of the whole of Greece. The saviour of Greece against Persia was not to be destroyed. Athens was thus saved by her past services to the Hellas.

*Terms of
surrender*

The peace imposed on her the following terms: The Long Walls and fortifications of Piraeus were to be demolished; Athenian empire was lost and Athens remained independent and limited to the confines of Attica and Salamis; all exiles were to be allowed to return; Athens was to become an ally of Sparta and accept her leadership; Athenian fleet except 12 ships was forfeited. The peace was ratified and Lysander went to Piraeus to see the demolition of the Long Walls and fortifications done (404 B.C.). The only place that still remained to be conquered by Lysander was Samos which clung desperately to Athens. Lysander sailed off from Piraeus to occupy Samos.

*Empire
contrary to
Greek idea
of autonomy*

11/**Grievances of the Subject Allies of Athens:**

On the evidence of Herodotus and Thucydides, we know that Athenian authority was resented by her empire and she was unpopular. It goes without saying that 'empire was tyranny' and it entailed loss of autonomy on the part of the subject allies, and this was against Greek political instinct. The conversion of the confederacy of Delos into an empire had its consequential results in the transfer of the treasury of the League of Athens, abolition of the Synod and the transformation of the Board of Hellenotamiae into an Athenian magistracy. Further, the jurisdiction of the Athenian law courts had been extended to the whole of the empire in respect of criminal and commercial suits. Chios, Lesbos and Samos were the only three of the allies who were allowed to retain their autonomy. These apart, Athens imposed democratic constitution in all the allied states as she would not tolerate any

*Jurisdiction
of the Athe-
nian courts*

*Democratic
Constitution
imposed on
the allies*

other form of government. Besides, the subject allies had more special grievances to complain of.

The jurisdiction of the Athenian courts in commercial suits was no doubt favourable for the allies, for it made it possible to enforce a claim against the citizen of another state. But this was no substitute for their own legal system and law courts. The Greek conception of autonomy included independent jurisdiction.

*Jurisdiction
of the court
of law con-
trary to
Greek
conception
of indepen-
dent
jurisdiction*

Further, occasions were not rare when the Athenian law courts acted as an engine of political oppression. At the instance of local party leaders aristocrats in the subject states were brought to Athens to stand trial on some fictitious charge and convicted.

*Political
oppression*

The spending of the money realised from the subject allies at the sweet-will of Athens was strongly resented. Periclean argument that so long as Athens kept the Persians at bay, she was under no obligation to render any account for the moneys contributed by them. He even began spending such moneys for beautification of Athens. Thucydides had protested against this, but in vain.

*Spending
of tributes
for purposes
other than
defence*

Despite the fact that assessment of tribute was not excessive, the grievance was on the ground that it was assessed by Athens, and Athens might use the power of assessment inequitably, discriminating against states like Thasos and Aegina which were hostile to Athens.

*Athenian
assessment
of tribute
— possibility
of inequity*

The Athenian policy of planting *cleruchies*, i.e. colonies of the Athenian people, in subject states was as old as Cleisthenes. But under Pericles these became instruments of Athenian imperialism. The *cleruchies* 'served two purposes, an economic and a military'. It provided outlet for the excess of population who would otherwise have no employment within the country. It also served as important strategical positions within the Empire. The *cleruchy* was on occasions planted in the subject allies' country as a punishment for revolt, so that the Athenians in the *cleruchy* might

*Cleruchies
— instru-
ments of
imperial
system*

*Comparative
privileged
position of
Cleruchies
generated
resentment*

*Athenian
currency
enforced on
the allies*

*Release from
and defence
against
Persia*

*Enforcement
of claim on
citizens of
other states*

*Democracy
—subverted
Greek
political
instinct*

*Athenian
currency
—a boon*

look after the interests of Athens. The expulsion of the sons of the soil to accommodate the Athenian colonies engendered bitter feeling which was not diminished by the reduction of the amount of tribute as compensation. The fact that the *cleruchies* were not required to pay any tribute naturally gave rise to resentment. The Athenian currency was enforced on the subject allies. But the subject allies saw in it an invasion on their right to have their own currency. These grievances made the subject allies inimically disposed and they were naturally looking forward for breaking away from the Athenian tutelage.

Yet it must not be thought that the allies had not derived any advantage from Athens. These were quite numerous. *First*, the allies had not only been released from the Persian yoke but were being defended against any possible attempt by Persia to reconquer them. This was certainly the greatest argument on the side of Athens to claim obedience and tribute from the subject allies.

Secondly, the jurisdiction of the Athenian court particularly in commercial suits was of great help to the subject allies. For, it was the best method to enforce claims on citizens of other states. The number of such commercial suits was not small either.

Thirdly, the Greek idea of rights and of individual freedom could best be exercised in a democracy. Athens, in substituting other forms of government in the subject states by democracy certainly helped, in one way, to subvert the Greek political instinct.

Fourthly, the Athenian coins were the only coins which were not debased. While in every state there had been debased coins in circulation and merchandise crossing borders of different countries had to be re-valued in terms of the value of the currency of the country into which it went, the Athenian coins were acceptable to every one without question. Enforcement of Athenian currency all throughout the Empire was therefore a positive advantage.

Fifthly, Athenian imperialism engendered a sense of unity among the Greeks of the allied states. This spirit of unity taught lessons to the Greeks which were never lost. This unity was all the more supplemented by the commercial intercourse which during the course of the long war the Athenians did not abandon. The Mediterranean coasts formed a big, single market the advantage of which was derived by the subject allies as well. The commercial centre at Piraeus was also frequented by the merchants of the subject-states.

*Unity:
Commercial
benefits*

Sixthly, Athens rendered the great service of suppression of piracy which was spreading terror in the Aegean. During the period of Athenian Empire the Aegean was free from the evils of piracy which before and after the days of the Athenian Empire became a public nuisance.

*Eradication
of the evils
of piracy*

Lastly, the greatest service that Athens rendered to the subject allies was to keep Persia at bay. 'Had the Athenian Empire disappeared, she (Persia) would have certainly been able to make good her claims' on the Greeks on the fringe of the Asia Minor.

*Persia held
at bay*

12/Causes of Athenian Downfall: The fall of Athens was related to many factors which began to manifest themselves as soon as the myth of Athens' naval invincibility was exploded as a result of the Sicilian debacle. Sicilian catastrophe had consequences more than what met our eyes immediately.

*Causes of
Athenian
downfall*

It had by a single stroke annihilated her navy, but what was worse, the Athenians themselves confessed that affairs in Athens were hopelessly bad. Two consequences naturally followed: the subject allies took it as the right moment to break off from the Athenian empire. The Persians were roused to a feeling of wresting the dominions lost to Athens in Asia Minor and the coast some seventy years ago.

*Hopelessly
bad internal
condition of
Athens*

*Intervention
by Persia*

The Athenians were themselves to be largely blamed for their love of novelty that had led them to undertake more than they could accomplish. Expedition

*Fault of the
Athenians
themselves*

to Sicily was one such enterprise. The demoralisation that began with the news of Sicilian catastrophe reaching Athens showed itself in the condemnation of the generals after the victory at the Battle of Arginusæ.

*Failure to
make peace
at the right
moment*

Athens could certainly have prevented the war to become an *Annihilation War* had they made peace at the right moment. Had it not been for the Spartans, Athens would have been destroyed as desired by the Peloponnesian confederates.

*Combination
of resources of
Persia and
ability of
Lysander*

Another cause that helped Athenian downfall was the combination of resources of Persia with the extraordinary ability of Lysander.

*Too much
latitude to
individuals*

Of the more deeply seated causes one was the 'tendency of the Athenian character and Athenian policy as compared with that of Sparta. While strict discipline prevailed in Sparta, the individual being accustomed to render unreflecting obedience to the commands of his superiors, in Athens, the principle of *Laissez-faire* generated a certain weakness in the individual'. Even this would not have been so serious, a more important fault on the part of the Athenians and which was more decisive factor, was that while Athens treated her own citizens with indulgence, represented the principle of despotism to outsiders. This ran counter to the Greek ideas and feelings. Athenian League being irksome to its members, survival of the empire depended on Athens having good generals and whenever Athens became incapable of using her good generals, she was bound to fall.

*Athenians
despotic
outside
Athens*

*Intellectual
movement
in the fifth
century*

Athenian downfall was also due to the fact that she followed a new movement in the fifth century, of new philosophy, new spirit of enquiry and intellectual pursuit which made emancipation from every kind of authority extremely forceful.

*Oligarch's
secret
conspiracy*

It was also suspected that the oligarchs had been for many years past deliberately planning to place the city at the mercy of the enemy for the purpose of

destroying democracy. The attempt of the government of *Four Hundred* to come to terms with Sparta lends support to this view.

Lastly, the conduct of the Athenian generals in fixing their station at Aegospotami despite Alcibiades' sane advice to withdraw to Sestos, and delivering the sailors to the foe like sheep led to the altar seems to be such a measure of folly that suspicion of treachery becomes confirmed. The battle was won practically without a fight.

*Folly of the
Athenian
generals at
Aegospotami*

It may be concluded that the Athenian empire went down not because her enemies had any greater strength compared to her, but because there had been a systematic bad management of the empire, imperial administration as also of the military and naval forces, as particularly seen in Aegospotami.

13/Lysander: Son of Aristocritus, Lysander was born and bred in poverty, but nobody conformed to the Spartan discipline more than he. He had a firm heart and was above temptation of all kinds. He imbibed in his education the love of fame, and jealousy of honour which were characteristic of the Spartans. Lysander bore his poverty well throughout his life. He filled Sparta with gold but himself remained poor. His incorruptibility, the attention he paid to the great were rather unusual in the Spartans. Yet in prosecuting his own aim he was absolutely unscrupulous and expediency was the principle of action with him; it was the end that concerned him, not the means. He was a soldier to the finger-tips.

Character

After the Athenian overthrow in Sicily when the Athenians found themselves driven out of the sea and themselves on the verge of ruin, Alcibiades who was allowed to return, was given the sole command as strategos. Soon such changes were effected that Athens again became equal in naval conflicts with Sparta. The Spartans were rather afraid, and resolved to prosecute the war with double diligence and as it required an able general they gave Lysander the

*Appointed
admiral*

*Visit of
Lysander to
Cyrus:
Persian help*

command at sea. Lysander was the best choice in the circumstances, for he was an able general and skilful diplomatist. Persian help that Sparta had been receiving for some years past also demanded the appointment of a capable admiral for its continuance. Lysander visited Cyrus at Sardis, impressed him by his regard for the Great King's son and more by his wisdom, ability and incorruptibility. Between Lysander a man in the very vigour of age, and Persian King Cyrus sprang up the warmest of affections. The whole of Cyrus' wealth was placed at the service of Sparta. He returned with sufficient Persian gold for increasing the number of ships and payment to his sailors at a higher rate, and the presents which Cyrus gave him were also distributed by him among them. By paying higher than usual rate of wage to the sailors he enticed away many sailors from Athenian ships. His care of his men and for their interest made Lysander intensely popular with them. A new enthusiasm, diligence and discipline marked their preparation for war with Athens.

*Promise of
liberty to
the subject
allies of
Athens*

Lysander's other objective was to seduce the Athenian allies to his side. To this end he declared granting of liberty to the Asiatic Greek cities as also of the Aegean from the imperial yoke of Athens. Anti-Athenian clubs were organised by him in those areas and promised them favour after the fall of Athens.

*Battle of
Arginusae
(406 B.C.)*

In the battle that followed, in Spring of 406 B.C. at Notion, Lysander won a victory over the Athenian fleet and captured fifteen of the Athenian ships. The new year saw a change of admirals on the Spartan side, as required by their law, and Lysander was replaced by Callicratidas who was given a fleet of 140 ships to command. Athens counted the cost beforehand and made use of the dedicatory gold in temples and fitted out a fleet of 150 ships. Spartan admiral in the mean time had added to his number of ships and it stood at 170 now. Callicratidas blockaded Mytilene. The Athenian fleet under Conon proceeded to relieve the blockade. A great battle was fought near the islets

of Arginusae and the Athenians were victorious. Sparta was obliged to make peace overtures to Athens, which were rejected. In the mean time, the Persian gold was also not flowing in, for unless money was combined with ability of generals, there was no use for sending it.

To secure Persian co-operation, it was generally felt that Lysander must be restored to command. Cyrus desired as much. Lysander was given the real command under a nominal admiral to save law. Lysander visited Cyrus at Sardis at a moment which was doubly favourable. Persian assistance was restored and Cyrus' confidence in Lysander, which had developed into friendship made him to leave the charge of his satrapy with Lysander in order to attend his father Darius' bedside who was dying. In addition to the money granted to Lysander for prosecuting war, the entire revenue derived from tribute was placed at his disposal for use in the war. The plan was to avoid any straight fight with Athens but to attack the Athenian empire. This received Cyrus' endorsement.

*Lysander
restored
to the
command*

*Persian
co-operation
and wealth
ensured*

With Persian money and with the willingness of the Athenian allies, Lysander naturally became extremely powerful as no Spartan general had been ever before. Avoiding direct battle with the Athenians Lysander carried on certain diversionary raids in the Aegean, moved to the Hellespont and besieged Lampsacus which was a strategic point both from military and economic points of view. It stood on the route to Athens from the Pontus and its occupation by the enemy hindered passage of the Athenian grain ships.

*Lysander in
Hellespont*

The Athenians sent a fleet of 180 triremes to follow Lysander in Lampsacus and anchored at Aegospotami. Lampsacus was taken before the Athenian fleet could reach Sestos. The Athenian attempt to lure Lysander to a battle did not succeed and the Athenians moving up and down the seas would relax themselves on the shores of Aegospotami. Four successive days they did so. On the fifth day when the Athenian

*Battle of
Aegospotami
(405 B.C.):
Lysander's
unique
victory*

sailors were on the shore for meals and unmindful of their defence, Lysander swooped down on the Athenian ships which then were crewless. There was no battle, no resistance. Twenty of the Athenian ships (12 according to Plutarch) could escape and the remainder (160) were captured by Lysander. Whether there was treachery among the Athenian generals or not, the result was disastrous. All the Athenians were taken prisoners of whom three to four thousand had been slain. The Battle of Aegospotami dealt the final blow to the Athenian empire. Never, perhaps was a victory more complete and overwhelming in consequence and never was a defeat so disgraceful and so disastrous.

*Capitulation
of Athens*

Lysander's next move was to compel the city of Athens to surrender. This he planned to do by starving the city. Grain supply to Athens had already been cut down, now to increase the distress of the Athenians, Lysander drove all the Athenian cleruchs, i.e. colonists to Athens. Influx of the colonists made the already starving city incapable of sustaining itself any longer. It capitulated. By the peace treaty that followed, Lysander obtained the demolition of the Long Walls and the fortresses at Piraeus. The entire empire of Athens became free amidst general rejoicing. This was followed by the capture of Samos, a faithful and loyal subject ally of Athens and the establishment of an oligarchy there after the overthrow of democracy. Athens had to join the Peloponnesian League and accept Lacedaemonian leadership.

*Terms of
peace*

*Lysander's
exaltation*

Lysander had now attained greater power than any Grecian before him, yet the loftiness of his heart far exceeded it. According to Duris, he was the first Grecian to whom altars were erected by several cities and sacrifices offered as to gods. Cyrus sent his congratulatory present of a galley made of gold and ivory. But his power and position soon excited the jealousy and apprehension among the Spartans themselves. At Samos, Lysander almost behaved like

a King and held a court. He was recalled and obeying the summons he came back to Sparta carrying a letter from the Persian satrap Pharnabazus to justify him. But the letter, on opening, was found to contain indictment of Lysander. Ridicule and jeering made Lysander uncomfortable in Sparta and remembering his past services, he was allowed to depart on a mission to the temple of Zeus Ammon in Libya. Yet his influence and importance were not all gone. He conceived a plan to effect a revolution in Sparta and make kingship elective and to make himself second only to the king and command the army for life. But the method he chose was religious influence. He sought oracular support to his plan but it failed. He next supported Agesilaus to the throne of Sparta in preference to Aegis' son Leotychidas. But Agesilaus was clever enough not to be a tool in the hands of the king-maker. With the outbreak of war between Sparta and her old ally Boeotia he was sent out. In the investment of Haliastus he and Pausanias were to work conjointly but on his arrival earlier than Pausanias, he attacked the city but was routed and killed (395 B.C.).

*Jealousy
against him*

*Lysander
discredited
---sent to
Libya*

*His plan of
a new
revolutionary
constitution
for Sparta*

Despite his faults—his unscrupulousness in diplomacy and cruelty in dealing with his enemies, Lysander stands supreme in his service to his state. Poverty added lustre to his virtue. Absolutely incorruptible and extraordinarily able as a general, Lysander had commissioned the Spartan support in dealing a final blow to Athens and her empire. He was preceded in this by Brasidas and Gylippus, the three Spartans who brought Athens to her knees. It was Lysander's part to bring the Peloponnesian War to a close. But the last part of his career was marked by attempts at self-aggrandisement and high ambition, but to no purpose. If the last part of his career had blurred the lustre of his earlier exploits to some extent, yet he goes down in history as an able general and skilful diplomat who administered the final mortal blow to Athens.

Estimate

CHAPTER 12

Greece in the Fifth Century B.C.

*Intellectual
movement in
the fifth
century
Greece*

The common culture of the Greeks began assuming distinctive forms and elegance since early sixth century before the birth of Christ and the speculations of the Ionian philosophers by the end of the century or from the beginning of the fifth century B.C. had produced an intellectual movement which permeated the whole of Greece. Shelley remarked that 'the period which intervened between the birth of Pericles and the death of Aristotle is undoubtedly, whether considered in itself or with reference to the effect which it has produced upon the subsequent destinies of civilized man, the most memorable in the history of the world'.

*Sense of
humour*

*Keen critics:
Capable of
enthusiasm*

*Fickle-
mindedness*

*Refined
artistic taste*

1/Athenians in the Fifth Century B.C.: The Athenians were the most distinguished among all the Greeks except of Sicily, in quickness of apprehension, subtlety of humour, fineness in pronunciation. Their sense of humour was developed to an extraordinary degree. The Athenians were good critics, capable of great enthusiasm, willing to recognise excellence in achievement, placing high value on moral worth. An Athenian would persecute his great men with the same rapidity with which he had applauded them. 'With his natural acuteness he quickly discovered their weak points and was highly pleased when they were exposed in the public. This accounts for the great popularity of comic stage enjoyed in Athens.' The Athenians had a strong love of art, but what was more they had a refined artistic taste. This specially refined taste of the people of Athens explains their perfection in art and sculpture. Attachment to their ancient religion, both to its meaning and form was another important characteristic of the Athenian people. 'Taking him altogether, the Athenian of the

fifth as also of the first half of the fourth century was a highly peculiar phenomenon'. Excepting the high degree of refinement and the acuteness of perception which characterised the Athenians, they are comparable to the citizens of modern capitals. In highly developed taste in art and marked pietism the Athenians stood far higher than the citizens of modern capitals. It has been asserted by some modern writers that the intellectual level of the ancient Athenian people was on an average the same as that of the modern working men. Their knowledge was not far in advance of the children of the elementary schools of modern times. But as Holm points out, this is far from truth. The mechanical repetition of the same type of work cripples the intellect now-a-days, but the labour was done by the slaves in Athens and whatever work the poor citizens did were mostly of the nature of art and such work would not paralyse the mind. The distinctions that are to be seen in modern societies, were not present in Athens and the means of education were more generally accessible to all than they are in modern times. All this naturally made the Athenians highly suitable for the new arts and sciences in the fifth century.

*A highly
peculiar
phenomenon*

*Comparison
with modern
citizens*

*Education
more
generally
accessible*

*Athenians
highly
suitable for
new arts and*

'The feeling for form and rhythm, for precision and clarity, for proportion and order is the central fact in Greek culture'; Athenians imbibed these in an abundant degree. Pursuit of wealth, beauty and knowledge was the absorbing interests of every Athenian. He would not choose, the 'power of the Persian King in preference to beauty'. The useful, beautiful and the good were almost as closely mixed in his thought as was in the philosophy of Socrates. Art, to his mind was first of all an adornment of the ways and 'means of life.' The artist in the Athenian society was not a recluse in a solitary studio, but an artisan working with labourers of varying degrees of skill in a public and intelligible task. 'Athens brought together, from all the Greek world, a greater concourse of artists, as

*Form and
rhythm*

*Worshippers
of beauty*

*Artist—an
artisan*

*Fifth century
Athens was
like
Renaissance
Rome*

well as of philosophers and poets, than any other city except Renaissance Rome and these men, competing in fervent rivalry and co-operating under enlightened statesmanship, realised in fair measure the vision of Pericles.'

*Basis of
Athenian
democracy,
culture and
imperialism'*

2/Athenian Economy in the Fifth Century B.C.: Production and distribution of wealth are the bases on which every government has to depend. No wonder the base of the Athenian democracy, culture and imperialism was production and distribution of wealth. Agriculture, industry, trade and commerce are the source of wealth of every developed society but in the fifth century B.C. Athens' economy was based on these. In one century, that is, the fifth century B.C. Athens passed from household economy to national and international economy.

Agriculture

In every society the most needed yet comparatively poor section is the peasantry. In Athens only free men could own land and the peasants were landowners and had the franchise. The Athenians held trade and industry as somewhat degrading, but regarded husbandry as honourable, for this was to their mind, the ground work of national economy, military power and personal character.

*Scanty food
production*

The Athenian soil was poor and impoverished by scanty rainfall, erosion by winter floods, deforestation and aridness. One-third of the area was unsuitable for cultivation. But the Athenians knew the art of agriculture well and did not shirk toil for it. Irrigation, system of transplantation, use of fertilising salts, sewage of the city for increased production were known to them. Yet the produce was only enough for twenty-five per cent. of the population. Without import of food, which they did from Byzantium, Syria, Egypt, Italy and Sicily, they would starve. This was precisely the motive force behind Athenian imperialism and the necessity for a powerful fleet, as also good ports.

*Import of
grains from
outside*

*Urge to
imperialism,
navy and ports*

Parsimonious grain produce was supplemented by the Athenians by generous harvests of grapes and olives,

thanks to-Persistratus and Solon for introducing them. Periclean Greece was very rich in olive produce and many a landscape was covered by the olive trees. Vines were grown by terrace-cultivation. The Athenians used olive oil for cooking, anointing, illumination and fuel. It was the richest crop of the country and Athens had a monopoly of export which paid for her grain imports. Fig trees were also grown and by special care rich produce of sweet figs was obtained. Figs were the main source of health and energy and as such Athens would not permit export of figs. Agricultural produce of Athens comprised cereals, olive oil, grapes, figs which were the staples of diet of the Athenians. Cattle was a negligible source of food, the horses were bred for racing, goats for milk, sheep for wool, asses, mules, cows as beasts of burden, and chiefly pigs for meat. Honey served the purpose of sugar. Fish was a common place delicacy and was taken both fresh and dried. Beans, peas, cabbages, lettuce, onions and garlicks were the vegetables. Eggs were in common use. Porridge, flat loaves and cakes were the different forms in which cereals were taken. Wine was used as stimulant and used to be cooled underground by ice and snow.

*Cereals,
olive, grapes,
figs—staples
of diet of the
Athenians*

*Other sources
of food*

The fifth century Athenians had developed mining, metallurgical, stone and marble quarrying and many other industries to a degree that forces our admiration. Soil of Athens is rich in silver, lead, marble, iron, zinc. The silver mines at Laurion or Laurium were very rich and in the language of Aeschylus, Laurion was a 'fountain running silver for Athens'. These mines were the main source of revenue of the government as also a source of private fortune for those Athenians who supplied slaves for the mines, some twenty thousand worked in the mines including superintendents and engineers for a ten hour shift. Mining operation continued night and day without interruption. When in the Peloponnesian War the Spartans captured Laurium the entire economy of Athens was upset.

*Industries:
Mining*

*Metallurgy:
Marble and
stone quarries*

Silver apart, the Athenians obtained zinc, iron, lead and marble from mines. Metallurgy also developed with the progress of mining industry.

*Other
industries*

Artisans

Textiles

*Domestic
manufacture
developed
into
workshops*

*Trade and
commerce*

*Difficult
transport
system*

Other industries were rather of smaller scale compared to the mining industries. These were wagon-making, ship-building, shoe and saddle manufacturing, harness-making, etc. Skilled artisans comprised moulders, carpenters, stone cutters, metal workers, painters, sword-makers, shield-makers, turners, millers, lamp-makers, blacksmiths, bakers, fishmongers, etc., who were essential for a busy and varied economic life. Textiles for common use were produced in every home by women. Loom, spinning wheel, embroidery frame were to be seen in every household. Special fabrics, however, came from workshops as also from abroad—from Egypt, Tarentum, dyed woolens from Syracuse, blankets from Corinth carpets from the Near East and Carthage, coverlets from Cyprus. The development of the domestic textile industry into something like factory system began under Pericles who like Alcibiades after him, owned a factory. Availability of cheap slave labour resulted in absence of incentive to develop machineries. The Athenian *ergasteria* were workshops rather than factories.

Surplus in production is the beginning of trade. When Athens began to produce more than the consumption need of her people there arose the question of export. Likewise, the commodities Athens could not produce in sufficient quantity to meet the need of her people, there was the necessity for import. But the most serious obstacle to trade was the difficult transport system. Roads were poor and the sea was infested with pirates. *Sacred Way* running from Athens to Eleusis was the finest of roads but was too narrow for the vehicles. Bridges were precarious, often washed away by floods. Fragile wagons drawn by oxen would furnish a poor transport, for often there was breakdown in transit or would get bogged in the mud. Mule provided the safest and easiest transport and was a little

faster too. Roadside inns were dens of robbers and stay therein was a punishment, for beds were full of vermin. Transport by land was therefore very costly. Sea transport was cheaper, passenger tariff was quite low. But the ships carried no or very few passengers, they were used as carriers of goods or serve as battleships in times of war. Ships were run by sails and slaves who worked as oarsmen. Problem of trade next to transport was the medium of exchange. Every city had its own coinage and system of weights and measures. It was necessary for traders to transvalue all values of commodities in terms of the currency of the city into which their merchandise would enter. What created the greatest difficulty was the debasing of coins by every city except Athens and thereby pay less value for the commodities received. The Athenian government ever since the time of Solon gave the Athenian trade a powerful support by introducing a reliable coinage which would be accepted throughout the Mediterranean world and which tended to displace the local currencies in the Aegean. Currency was mainly of silver, copper, iron and bronze. Only very rarely gold used to be minted.

*Medium of
exchange:
Athenian
coins gladly
accepted*

*Currency
system
of Athens*

Trade was the soul of the Athenian economy. In the fifth century the individual producers used to market their commodities but with the growth of the number of the traders the need for the intermediary of the market, that is, the middlemen who would stock the commodities before they were purchased by the consumer was felt, at such stockists grew up. A class of retail sellers who peddled commodities in the streets, sellers in fairs, festival, etc., also grew up.

*Growth of
market
intermediaries,
peddlers, etc.*

The foreign commerce developed even in quicker pace than the internal trade. In the fifth century the Athenian economy passed from household economy to urban economy and from urban economy to international economy. The advantage of an international division of labour was understood by different cities and each specialised in those products in which it

Commerce

*Port:
Centre of
distribution*

was best because of the availability of raw materials and skilled labour. But Athens was the only city where every kind of commodity could be found. Isocrates remarks that 'The articles which it is difficult to get, one here, one there, from the rest of the world, all these it is easy to buy in Athens.' Warehouses, docks, ports and markets and the banks at Piraeus offered every facility for commerce and soon its port became the centre of distribution of commodities between the East and the West. Thucydides remarks that the magnitude of Athens drew the produce of the world into her harbour so that the Athenians could use the products of other countries as their own. Foreign merchants carried wine, oil, minerals, marble, pottery, arms, books, works of arts produced in Athens while grains, fruits, meat, fish, nuts, copper, iron, timber, gold, wool, flax, dyes, spices, glass, perfumes, bronze, tin, boots, etc., from foreign countries like Syria, Byzantium, Italy, Sicily, England, Cyprus, Near East, Thrace, Thesos, Cyrene, Phoenicia, Corinth, etc. The Athenian colonies not only served as markets for Athenian commodities but also as shipping agents to send the goods into the interior. Towards the end of the fifth century B.C. the Athenian import and export trade reached \$144,000,000 a year.

*Value of
export and
import trade
reached a
high figure*

Piracy

The difficulty of sea borne commerce of Athens was the pirates of the Aegean. Athens for fifty years, from 480 to 430 B.C. had to keep the Aegean safe from the pirates.

Finance

In Athens of the fifth century there were no stock exchange nor joint-stock companies, for financing the growing needs of traders. But banks were there. Individuals used to lend money on mortgages at rates of interest as high as 16 to 18 per cent. But besides these money-lenders there were temples which were repositories of surplus savings of individuals, and would lend money to individuals and to government at moderate rate of interest. 'The temple of Apollo at Delphi is in some measure an international bank for all Greece.'

Another class of bankers arose in the fifth century Athens, called *trapeza* who were originally money changers but later on began to receive deposits and lend money at rates of interest varying from 12 to 30 per cent. according to the risk involved.

The foregoing narrative leaves us in no doubt that Athens attained an unprecedented prosperity in the fifth century B.C. but the danger lurking in it was the growing dependence of a faster growing population, upon import of foreign corn. This necessitated her controlling the Hellespont and the Black Sea. Athens' persistent colonisation of the coasts and isles to the straits and her expeditions to Egypt (459 B.C.) and Sicily (415 B.C.) were mainly aimed at keeping her grain import undisturbed. It was this dependence that compelled her to transform the confederacy of Delos into her empire. The fall of Athens was also due to this dependence. Starvation and eventual surrender of Athens in 405 B.C. was the inevitable result of her dependence on foreign corn. Yet, it must be mentioned that it was trade and commerce that made Athens rich and supplied her with the sinews of cultural development. Through the incoming and outgoing merchants perspectives were changed, new ideas and new ways transcended the taboos and sloth of conservatism and gave rise to a mercantile civilisation. In Athens the East and the West met and shook each other into a new awakening and new spirit. Such were the contributions of trade and commerce to Athens.

3/Greek Philosophy: From the last quarter of the sixth to the end of the fifth century B.C. was a period in which reason was striving to establish her rule in every sphere and may reasonably be called *Greek Age of Illumination*. The old philosophy and old sciences began to be substituted by Sophists who played a different role. 'It was the age of the Sophists' and under them results of science were coming into contact with life. Zeno of Elea's reaction against the earlier philosophical speculations and his conception

*Dependence
on foreign
corn—
cause of
her fall*

*Athens a
meeting
place of
East and
West
through*

*New
philosophical
speculations:
Sophists*

*Demand for
higher
education*

of time, space and motion influenced the intellectual activities of Protagoras, Gorgias and Socrates. There was a change in the mode of enquiry from macrocosm to microcosm. Reason substituted dogma and man was becoming more self-conscious. Demand for knowledge by men aspiring to be cultured was due to enquiries and researches by scientific men in Ionia. Instruction in geography, mathematics, physics, astronomy, history, etc., was largely sought. Demand for higher education was also increased with the rise of democratic commonwealths, for cultivation of oratory

*Work of the
Sophists*

was essential to persons having political ambitions. Power of clear exposition and persuasion, argument and self-assertion was necessary in Assemblies as well as in law courts. This demand for higher education was met by *Sophists*, that is teachers of wisdom, synonymous with the term 'professors'. Collectively they formed what may be called a university. They were itinerant lecturers who delivered lectures in public halls to their pupils on payment. Almost all Sophists were versatile and could teach nearly all subjects.

*Their con-
tributions*

The Sophists imparted education to prepare their pupils for a good life and all the duties that devolve on citizens. Their work was not confined to lecturing only, they discussed current topics, criticised political affairs, diffused ideas and did in a limited extent the part of modern journalists. They set afloat new ideas, held varied views and doctrines. They contributed much to the fund of human knowledge. The Sophists were nationalists and worked for the spread of enlightenment. Too much commercialisation of education by the Sophists earned denunciation of Philosopher Plato and the term *Sophistry* acquired its modern meaning, as some think, from it.

*Plato's
denunciation*

of Abdera

The most typical of the Sophists was Protagoras of Abdera. Even Plato who was not very fair to the Sophists respected Protagoras, called him a gentleman and a philosopher 'never, losing his temper, never jealous of another's brilliance'. Protagoras, as Plato

himself observed, undertook to teach his pupils prudence in private and public matters, the art of persuasive speaking and the ability to understand and direct affairs of state. Protagoras has a distinct and important place in the history of philosophy for it was he who had propounded the *subjectivity of knowledge*, which he expressed in his formula that *man is the measure of all things, of the being of things that are, and of the non-being of things that are not*. Protagoras was the first to distinguish the parts of speech and founded the science of grammar for Europe.

Protagoras' contribution to philosophy and knowledge

Protagoras worked in Athens and was very intimate with Pericles. On one occasion he argued with Pericles on the *retributive theory of justice* which would lead to punishment to even animals and inanimate things. But Protagoras put up a counter theory that the object of punishment is to deter. As the Sophists were often engaged in training the aspirants to a political career, they were regarded as experts in Political Science. Pericles appointed Protagoras to draw up the constitution for the colony which he had set up at Thurii.

His theory of justice

Protagoras wrote a book on theology and read it to a chosen audience. In this book he asserted that the existence of gods could not be a matter of knowledge. He was accused of impiety by a certain Pythodorus. To avoid trial, the philosopher fled and sailed for Sicily (415 B.C.) and perished in the journey. It must be remembered when we speak of the spread of knowledge and reason in the fifth century Athens that the mass of citizens were still sunk in ignorance, and suspicious and jealous of the training received by the children of the well-to-do section of the people or persons of exceptional intellect. This explains why Anaxagoras before Protagoras, and Socrates after him were also charged with impiety.

Draws constitution of Thurii

Flight from Athens and death (415 B.C.)

Gorgias of Leontini carried on the skeptical revolution started by Anaxagoras and followed by

Gorgias of Leontini

*His
contribution
—New Greek
prose*

Protagoras, but he was clever enough to spend his life outside Athens. He studied philosophy and rhetoric with Empedocles and became so powerful a teacher of oratory that he was sent to Athens as an ambassador by Leontini. 'His career was typical of union between philosophy and statesmanship in Greece.' Although he was a philosophical thinker and politician, his fame rested chiefly on his ability as an orator and a stylist. 'He taught Greece how to write a new kind of prose—not the cold style which appeals only to understanding, but a brilliant style, rhythmic, flowery in diction, full of figures, speaking to the sense and imagination.' He was received with greatest enthusiasm and esteem wherever he would go. In his book *On Nature* he sought to prove three propositions: nothing exists beyond the senses, if anything exists beyond the senses, these would be unknowable, for all knowledge comes through senses and if any supersensual thing would be knowable, it would not be communicable. After travelling in many states and enjoying their hospitality he settled down in Thessaly and died at the ripe old age of hundred and five.

*Hippias
of Elis:
A university
in himself*

Hippias of Elis was yet another Sophist who was a university in himself. He taught astronomy, mathematics, made original contributions to geometry, he was a musician, a poet, an orator and a historian. He lectured on politics, ethics, literature and laid the foundation of Greek chronology by compiling the chronology of the victors at the Olympic games. He worked as an envoy of Elis to other states. He also possessed the skill of an artisan. Although his work on philosophy was little, yet his contributions were of great importance. He castigated the degenerative artificiality of city life and contrasted law with nature, remarking that law was a tyrant on mankind.

*Prodicus
of Ceos*

Prodicus of Ceos was another Sophist, who was far inferior to Protagoras and Gorgias, but enjoyed a high reputation in Athens. He continued the work of Protagoras in grammar and fixed the parts of speech.

He specialised in the study of diction and taught cosmology in Athens. He wrote a treatise on synonyms. He was a pessimist and believed that bad things are more numerous in a man's life than good.

Other Sophists such as Antiphon, Thrasy-machus were of a lesser type. Antiphon like Democritus believed in atheism and materialism, and defined justice in terms of expediency. Thrasy-machus identified right with might and asserted that the success that the villains normally attain point to the non-existence of gods.

*Antiphon,
Thrasy-
machus*

In the history of Greece and for that matter, in that of Athens, the Sophists must be regarded as one of the most vital factors. Not only Greece, but Europe benefited from their learning. Grammar and logic for Europe were their invention. 'They developed dialectic, analysed the forms of argument and taught men how to detect fallacies.' The Sophists, through their teaching made reasoning the ruling passion with the Greeks. 'By applying logic to language they promoted clarity and precision of thought, and facilitated accurate transmission of knowledge. Through them prose became a form of literature, and poetry became a vehicle of philosophy.' Refusing to follow tradition, the Sophists tested everything by the yardstick of reason and shared in the rationalist movement which ultimately broke off the ancient faith of the Hellas. Yet it will not be correct to credit the Sophists for all this. The new outlook was in the air and the growing wealth, leisure, travel and research as also speculation had their part to play in the above achievements. The deterioration of morals was also not due to their contribution. It was largely due to growing wealth unaided by philosophy which put an end to puritanism and stoicism. The emphasis on knowledge raised the educational level of the Greeks but it did not develop the intellect as it liberated intellect. Knowledge did not make men modest, on the contrary it made every man to consider himself the measure of all things.

*Contributions
of the
Sophists*

*Criticism of
the Sophists
and their
contributions*

*Degeneration
of public and
domestic
loyalty*

Idea that *Nature* was superior to *Law* led to a belief that whatever *Nature* permitted was good regardless of customs and laws. This led to new experiments in living. Ancient supports of Greek morality was sapped. Old men mourned the passing of domestic virtues and domestic fidelity. Pursuit of wealth and pleasure made public men reject morals as superstitious. The unscrupulous individualism led to chickenery and political demagoguery and degenerated the broad cosmopolitanism into callousness about patriotism or even readiness to handover the country to the highest bidder. Conservative and religious minded people and the common people of the urban democracy began to consider philosophy a danger to the state. Some philosophers themselves also joined in the attack upon the Sophists for the prevalent malady. Isocrates began his career by delivering a speech against the Sophists. Aristotle also continued the attack on them. Too much commercialisation of knowledge by the Sophists and their charging of exorbitant fees became a matter of great contempt with many. Yet we must conclude that this was but the darker side of the shield, for without the Sophists 'Socrates, Plato and Aristotle would have been impossible'.

*Without
them Socrates,
Plato and
Aristotle
impossible*

*New ideas
outraged
ancient
religious
belief*

4/**Socrates:** Old beliefs and prejudices outraged and endangered by the new subversive ideas of the fifth century while made it possible for the political opponents to excite ill-will against their antagonists, worked as a good handle to the conservative religionists. Protagoras, and Anaxagoras before him, were indicted for irreligion, the turn of Socrates was to come next.

*Sources of
information
about
Socrates*

The two sources of information which we have to rely on, are Plato and Xenophon. The former wrote 'imaginative dramas' while the latter wrote 'historical novels' and neither product can be taken as history. But Plato throughout the *Dialogues* gives us a consistent picture of the philosopher and this has been largely corroborated by Aeschines in his work *Alcibiades* fragments of which have been discovered. Xenophon's

Memorabilia and *Banquet* contain imaginary conversations in which Socrates is made to speak as the mouth-piece of Xenophon himself. Some of the ancient writers, Aristoxenus for instance, who on the testimony of his father observed that Socrates 'was a person without education, ignorant and debauched'.

Son of a Sculptor, Socrates himself took to his father's trade in his early life. His mother was a midwife. As a soldier in the Peloponnesian war he earned reputation at Potidaea, Delium and Amphipolis. It was he who saved the life and arms of Alcibiades in the Battle of Potidaea. In endurance, courage and perseverance in fatigue, cold and hunger Socrates set an example to others.

Early life

Socrates' face is known to all the world. His features, judging from his bust, was not typically Greek. His flat nose, thick lips and heavy beard were suggestive of a non-Greek.

Non-Greek features

From Plato and Xenophon it is known that he would remain shabbily dressed and would like bare feet more than sandals or shoes. He was free from the acquisitive instinct of common man and would limit his requirements to the barest minimum. He was 'rich in his poverty'. He was a pupil of Archelaus who was a disciple of Anaxagoras. In 406 B.C. he became a member of the *Council of Five Hundred*. He showed his independence by refusing to agree to the joint trial of all the generals after the Battle of Arginusae. Under the rule of the *Thirty* he nearly risked his life by refusing to carry out an illegal order. He showed moral and physical courage in all the public affairs in which he was concerned. Remarkable for courage and justice as he was, no less was his sobriety and temperance. He was a model of moderation and self-control, but was by no means an ascetic. He would drink like a gentleman, liked good company, rejected gifts and invitations from magnates and kings. 'All in all he was fortunate, he lived without working, read without

His character

writing, taught without routine, drank without dizziness and died before senility, almost without pain.' His morals, although not satisfying to all, were not unlike others of his time. His good humour and kindness were so captivating that many would put up with his morals. Both Plato and Xenophon speak in the same strain on his passing away calling him 'truly the wisest and justest and best of all men'.

His methods

Socrates was deeply influenced by Zeno who was the inventor of dialectic and Socrates learnt his methods. His intellectual curiosity had a blend of scepticism which he acquired from Zeno. Curious and disputant by nature Socrates was drawn to philosophy and was for a time fascinated by the Sophists. During the first half of his life Socrates studied physical science. Archelaus, his teacher turned him to ethics. Gradually a small group of friends gathered round him by the stimulus of his conversation. He found his greatest good in daily conversation about virtue, examination of self, 'for a life unscrutinised is unworthy of man'. Socrates and his circle soon became 'notorious' in Athens as thinkers. He would spend much of his time not in his accustomed haunts—gymnasia of the Academy and Lyceum but in the market place, workshops of artisans, and the streets, cross-examining people and exposing their erroneous convictions. His opponents objected that he tore down but never built, that he rejected other people's answers but never gave his own. He would protect himself from being cross-examined on the plea that he was ignorant. When the Delphic oracle declared him to be the wisest man Socrates ascribed it to his profession of ignorance.

*Opinions on
Socrates*

Socrates and his circle earned the ridicule of the comic poets. Ameipsias in his *Connus* and Aristophanes in his *Clouds* derided Socrates and his circle. But Xenophon testified that 'nothing was of greater benefit than to associate with Socrates, and to converse with him, on any occasion, on any subject whatever'. On Plato Socrates made a lasting impression and the

two minds were mingled forever in philosophical history. Crito, the rich man, looked upon Socrates with much affection. There is, however, nothing to show what was the relation of Socrates with Pericles although it is quite reasonable to think that they were acquainted mutually.

Socrates' was a philosophy which was elusive, tentative and unsystematic, but very much real and for which he lost his life. 'Of the Gods we know nothing' he would say, and with imperfect knowledge of human affairs one should not meddle with the affairs of heaven. He applied this scepticism more rigidly to physical sciences. One should, according to him, study them only so far as to guide one's life, but not beyond that. 'Know thyself' was what he wanted to impress on others. Socrates also argued that good was not good because the gods approve of it, but because it is good in itself. There was nothing, Socrates thought, more useful than knowledge, it is the highest of virtues. Right action emanates from knowledge. 'Highest good is happiness, the highest means to it is knowledge or intelligence.' He was the first champion of the supremacy of intellect and insisted that an individual must order his life by the guidance of his own intellect. He was the founder of utilitarianism. Socrates was a critic of democracy since he believed aristocracy to be the best form of government. Choice of magistrates by lot is regarded by him as absurd, for no one would be willing to choose a mason, a pilot or a flute-player by lot. While the shortcomings of such men would be less harmful those of the magistrates would be dangerous. Tyranny or Plutocracy was equally disliked by him.

*Socratic
philosophy*

Many youngmen who were attached to Socrates came from foreign countries who were destined to become great thinkers in future and founders of philosophical schools. In this, Socrates was the 'ancestor of all the later philosophers of Greece'. Alcibiades and Critias who were enemies of democracy were his

*Popular
antipathy
to Socrates*

disciples. This naturally created some antipathy to Socrates in the popular mind. Democratic leader Anytus' son, a youngman was so much infatuated by the discourses of Socrates that he would not respect his parents or gods, nor would he attend to his business. Anytus charged Socrates for being too ready to speak evil of men and asked him to be careful. The majority of the Athenians looked upon Socrates with irritated suspicion. Those who were orthodox regarded him as dangerous, for he rejected tradition and wanted to scrutinise everything by reason. Morality according to him was founded on individual conscience, not on the decree of god or in social good. His scepticism confounded and unsettled every custom and belief. To him was attributed the irreligion of the time, disrespect of the old by the young, loosened morals of the educated class and disorderly individualism that was consuming the Athenian life. Many of the oligarchic leaders were Socrates' disciples and when one of them Critias led an oligarchic revolution and a ruthless terror, democrats like Anytus and Meletus branded Socrates as the intellectual source of the oligarchical reaction in Athens and determined to remove him from Athenian life. He was accused of corrupting the youth of Athens, as also of irreligion and these were indictable offences under the law of Solon. He was a rebel against authority as such and did not hesitate to say that an old man has no right to be obeyed if he is not wise. Even ignorant parents are not entitled to obedience or support.

*Socrates
accused of
corrupting
the youth*

*No better
men than
Socrates—
Accusers
perfectly
right*

According to the provision of the Athenian law Socrates was found guilty and condemned to death by poisoning. But if his accusers succeeded in removing him they could not destroy his immense influence. His philosophy was passed down through Plato to Aristotle who turned it into a system of logic which has endured till today. Upon science his influence was however injurious for he turned youngmen from the pursuit of science. 'The most powerful element in his

influence was the example of his life and character. He became for Greek history a martyr and a saint. Posterity looks back at him as the most remarkable figure of the age of Illumination. Indeed there were no better men than Socrates although from the narrow legalistic point of view his accusers were perfectly right.

5/Greek Literature: Normally, the knowledge acquired in one generation through research and speculation provide the background for literature—poetry, drama and fiction, in the succeeding generation. But Greece was an exception in this regard for there poets and dramatists were themselves philosophers and they did their own thinking and had been in the intellectual vanguard of the time. Euripides exalted reason and used the tragic stage to disseminate rationalism.

Growth of literature simultaneously with philosophy

Rationalism and radicalism that came into conflict with conservatism of Greek religion, science and philosophy, found expression in poetry, drama as also in writing of history. The literature of the Greek Golden Age, i.e. fifth century B.C., reached such excellence as was not reached before the times of Shakespeare and Montaigne.

Influence of rationalism on literature

Decay of aristocratic patronage in the fifth century was the cause of less rich lyric poetry compared to that of the sixth century B.C. Pindar was the transition between the sixth and fifth centuries. While inheriting the lyric form of the sixth century he filled it with dramatic significance and after him poetry transcended its traditional limits and drama combined religion, music, dance, etc., and became greater vehicle for the splendour of the fifth century literature. Of the numerous compositions of Pindar only forty-five odes have survived, of them again only the words survive, none of the music. In his odes, the first section stated the theme, the second a selection from Greek mythology, the third and concluding section of a Pindaric ode was

Pindar a transition between the sixth and the fifth century B.C. poetry

*Unpopular
but of
immortal
fame*

usually one of moral counsel. He was, however, not popular in his lifetime yet he continued to enjoy the lifeless immortality of those writers whom all men praise and no one reads.

*Most
fortunate of*

6/Sophocles: Sophocles came from Colonus, a suburb of Athens. He was the son of a sword manufacturer who earned a fortune during the Peloponnesian War. He was a pessimist and in addition to wealth which he had inherited he had genius, beauty and health. He was the most fortunate of men, won the first prize for tragedy and double prize for wrestling and music. He was the friend of Pericles and held high offices under him and Pericles preferred his poetry to his politics. He was popular with the people for his character. He was witty, general, unassuming and pleasure-loving, as also endowed with a personal charm that atoned for all his faults.

*His con-
tributions
Sophocles*

Sophocles was in harmony with the religion as it was and reverently modified religious legends, adapting them to his own ideals and interpreting them to satisfy his own moral standard. Throughout Sophocles works the prevailing theme was the nemesis of punishment by jealous gods or impersonal fate and the moral was wisdom of conscience, honour and a modest moderation. Due to this blending of philosophy with poetry, music, dance and action that literature achieved grandeur. To Sophocles, life and art were two distinct things. Life he took in a most realistic way sharing in all the pleasures available in Athens, in art he was an idealist without trying to influence the present. 'The soul of Sophocles was in untroubled harmony with the received religion, but living in an atmosphere of criticism and speculation, even he could not keep his mind aloof from the questions which were debated by the thoughtful one of his time.' His *Antigone* dealt with relation of the individual to the state and difficult question of political and ethical science. He broaches the question whether an individual is bound to obey his government if it conflicts with his other duties and

justifies disobedience in such circumstances, in his *Antigone*. His work besides its importance in the history of dramatic poetry, occupies a high place in the development of European thought by touching the very roots of ethical themes in presenting a problem. He wrote altogether 113 plays and eighteen times he won the first prize at the Dionysian and twice the Lanaean festivals. The dominant qualities of these plays are beauty of style and mastery of technique. His *Trachinian Women* is a sensational melodrama. *Oedipus the King* has been illustrated by Aristotle as the perfection of dramatic structure and as conforming to Aristotelian definition of a tragedy. Characters have been drawn more clearly than in Aeschylus' dramas. *Oedipus at Colonus*, *Ajax*, *Pheloctetes*, *Oedipus Tyrannous* are some of his most celebrated works.

*Oedipus
the King*

7/Euripides: Born in the year in which the Battle of Salamis (480 B.C.) in the Attic town of Phyla, Euripides inherited some property and prominence from his parents. Euripides wished to be a philosopher but became a dramatist as Plato who wished to be a dramatist became a philosopher. It is known from Strabo that Euripides 'took the entire course of Anaxagoras', read with Prodicus for some time and was intimate with Socrates. He was deeply influenced by the Sophists and Sophistic movement entered the Dionysian stage through him. 'He became the Voltaire of Greek Enlightenment, worshipping reason with the destructive innuendo in the midst of dramas staged to celebrate a god.'

*Early life
and educa-
tion*

He was the author of seventy-five plays of which eighteen are extant, the important ones being *Hecuba*, *Orestes*, *Hippolytus*, *Alcestis*, *Eledra*, *Helena*, *Andromache*, *Medea* and the *Bacchae*. The themes of these plays were the legends of early Greeks. It has been remarked by the Cambridge historian that 'Euripides fixed his eyes on Athens. His imaginative world was peopled by Athenians'. He, however, made a sceptical protest against the existing beliefs. Euripides was

His works

*Influence of
his works
on comic
poetry*

a great teacher of rationalism and a daring critic of all established institutions and beliefs. His influence was also deep upon the comic poets. Time was then pregnant of new ideas, a new world was being born. 'Its midwives and its educators were Euripides and Socrates.' In his play *Alcestis* he 'secured a place for Attic tragedy in the ancestry, both of new comedy and of the romantic novel'. His *Hippolytus* was the first love tragedy in the extant literature. Likewise in *Medea* Jason falls in love with the royal princess Medea, and vows eternal love to her, but the lover's perfidy changed Medea's love into monstrous hatred. Here a ruthless intellectual analysis is applied to a highly tragic theme. It has been remarked that Euripides 'blurred those Hellenic ideals which were common man's best' without substituting them with anything, hence his scepticism was simply destructive. But as the Cambridge historian points out, it is not correct. For, when Heracles in his agony, wants to commit suicide, Theseus, his friend inspires him to harder and more heroic choice of life. *The Bacchae* was his masterpiece of extant authentic tragedy 'an unrivalled study of religious ecstasy, its heights and depths, its perils and allurements, the splendour of its promise and the cruelty of its effects'. He died in 406 B.C.

*Not
destructive
influence as
thought
by some*

8/Aeschylus: Athenian success against the Persians gave the Athenians the pride and stimulus, so necessary for an age of great drama. Aeschylus felt both pride and stimulus, for he not only wrote and spoke, but fought in the Battle of Marathon, Artemisium, Salamis and Plataea. He practically created Attic Tragedy and dominated the Athenian literature for a generation, lost his position of pride to youthful Sophocles, but recaptured supremacy with his work *Seven against Thebes*. He diminished the choral element in the drama and gave chief part to spoken words on the stage. It needed a man of Aeschylus' energy and ability to mould the Greek drama into its classic form by adding a second actor to the one, followed by

Thepsis, Aeschylus' forerunner, and transformed Dionysian chant from an oratory to a real play. His works numbered seventy, ninety according to some, of which only seven have survived. Of these the most famous is the *Prometheus Bound* and the greatest the *Oresteia* trilogy. Only fragments of his *Prometheus Unbound* have remained which do not give us any clear idea of the meaning of the play. In *Prometheus Bound* the play opens with the scene of Prometheus being chained to a rock in the Caucasus, at the command of Zeus for teaching men the art of making fire. Helpless and bound Prometheus hurls defiance to Olympus. The entire earth mourns with him. After even greater sufferings Prometheus at long last makes his peace with Zeus. This showed the struggle of human being against inescapable destiny, which was the theme of human life in the fifth century Greece. Prometheus' rebellion is another *Paradise Lost*. Aeschylus' *Oresteia* is greater than *Prometheus Bound* and has been by 'common consent the finest achievement in Greek drama, perhaps in all dramas'.

9/Aristophanes: Greek comedy assumed definite shape later than the Greek Tragedy and not until 460 B.C. Earliest Greek comic poets were Chionides, Magnes, Crates and Cratinus. The last mentioned poet was the most famous. He took social and political aspects of Athens as his subjects for ridicule. The ablest competitors of Aristophanes were Eupolis and Phrynichus.

*Earlier
comic poets*

Aristophanes as the comic poet was the mouth-piece of the opposition to the men in power and democracy. He had reasons to be in sympathy with aristocracy as he came of a cultured and prosperous family, and had some landed property in Aegina. He was in the spring-time of his life when Athens and Sparta began war. He was the spokesman of those who were dissatisfied with the existing institutions—democracy, new culture represented by science, sophistry and

Aristophanes

*of the
opposition
to the men
in power
and
democracy*

His works

rhetoric. His immediate object was to raise a laugh laughter is not approval but it conveys censure. Democracy and passion for education were the dominant forces in Athens and comedy necessarily attacked them to attract attention. The Athenians were to be made to laugh, whether at truth or falsehood was a matter of importance. On Pericles' death Cleon who represented the rich commercial interests, was subjected to such criticism by Aristophanes in his *The Babylonians* that Cleon had him prosecuted and fined. The reply came in Aristophanes next play *The Knight*. But in his *Wasps* and *The Acharnians*, Aristophanes' ruling interest was to ridicule war and to promote peace. In *The Peace*, Aristophanes was triumphant, Cleon was dead and Nicias was about to sign the peace treaty with Sparta.

*Irreligion
at the root of
disintegration
—according
to Aristophanes*

To Aristophanes' mind irreligion and democracy lay at the root of the disintegration of the Athenian public life. He endorsed Socrates' view that the sovereignty of the people had become the sovereignty of the politicians but held Socrates, Anaxagoras and the Sophists responsible for loosening the moral bonds which once made for social order and personal integrity. In *The Clouds* he made wild fun of the new philosophy in which an old man was represented as delighted to hear that Socrates had a Thinking Shop where any one can learn the arguments to justify anything even if it were false. The old man Strepsiades was in debt and wanted to know the arguments to repudiate his debt. His *The Thesmophoriazusae* and *The Frogs* were attacks upon Euripides. In *The Ecclesiazusae* Aristophanes turned his laughter on the radical movement in general.

*He gives the
shape and
aroma of the
time more
than the
historians*

It has been remarked that 'Aristophanes is an unclassified mixture of beauty, wisdom and filth. When the mood is upon him he can write lyrics of purest Greek serene, which no translation has ever yet conveyed. His dialogue is life itself, or perhaps it is swifter, racier, more vigorous than life dares be.

He belongs with Rabelais, Shakespeare and Dickens in the lusty vitality of his style, and like theirs his characters give us more keenly the shape and aroma of the time than all works of the historians; no one who has not read Aristophanes can know the Athenians'.

But Holm is of the opinion that Aristophanes' authority is no more than that of a modern comic paper. He remarks that 'Quite apart from the opinions he expresses and which no one need adopt, even the facts stated by him are not necessarily true. It is enough to bear in mind that his Socrates has no resemblance to the real Socrates'. 'His jokes about the origin of the Peloponnesian War ought never have been utilised for history'.

Holm's

Yet the plays of Aristophanes afford ample evidence of the instincts of the Athenian people. We know from Aristophanes that in the country-side the small farmers would look up to the wealthy land-owners and follow their lead. In town areas no such sentiment bound the old families and the population. It was in the urban proletariat that the demagogues found their chief support. The majority of the voters in the Athenian Assembly was from the urban population. Aristophanes' evidence shows us that the Athenian people was conservative by instinct and the Assembly was radical in its outlook. In his *Peace* Aristophanes reflected the growing desire for peace and the fratricidal strife that was grinding Greece into smithereens, now that the two enemies of peace, Brasidas and Cleon having vanished to the prospect of peace was brightest.

*Ample
evidence of
Athenian life*

*Political
view*

The trend of religion and morals from Sophistic scepticism to Epicurian individualism which posed a basic danger to the Athenian life was vehemently criticised by Aristophanes. He commended 'art, wit, old-fashioned piety and a life of pleasure and derided science, free-thought and an energetic one-sided devotion to political life'.

*His
criticism of
the basic
dangers to
Athenian life*

*Prose not
forgotten*

10/**History:** In the hey-day of dramatic poetry prose was not completely forgotten. In the fifth century B.C. the art of oratory was stimulated by democracy and law courts. *Techne Logon*, a treatise on the art of addressing the Assembly and the jury was produced in prose by Corax of Syracuse as early as 466 B.C. Gorgias, Antigihon, Lysias, Themistocles and Pericles, by their writings or speeches proved the effectiveness of simple speech.

*History—
greatest
achievement
of Periclean
prose*

But by far the most important achievement of the Periclean prose was history. 'In a sense it was the fifth century B.C. that discovered the past and consciously sought for a perspective of man in time. In Herodotus historiography has all the charm and vigour of youth, in Thucydides fifty years later, it has already reached a degree of maturity which no later age has ever surpassed.

*His early
life and
travels*

11/**Herodotus:** Born in Halicarnassus in 484 B.C. of a family that had participated in political intrigues and in consequence was exiled. Herodotus was then thirty-two years of age and began those far-reaching travels that supplied the background of his *Histories*. 'Wherever he went he observed and enquired with the eye of a scientist and the curiosity of a child, and when he settled down in Athens, he was armed with a rich assortment of notes concerning the geography, history, and manners of the Mediterranean states.' With these materials and with some help taken from the works of Hecataeus, Herodotus composed the most famous of all historical works on Egypt, the Near East and Greece to the close of the Persian War. In appreciation of the account of the part of the Athenians in the Persian War, the Athenian people rewarded him with 12 talents.

*His history
—runs up to
the close of
the Persian
Wars*

*His works—
a universal
history*

Herodotus brought into his narrative all the nations of the Mediterranean; it is more or less in the nature of a universal history and certainly much broader than

Thucydides' narrow subject. In his narrative an unconscious contrast between the Persian despotism and Greek democracy is found. Despite the confusing digressions and halting pace of his narrative, and despite Strabo's remark that there is 'much nonsense in Herodotus', his narrative has in it a thousand interesting illustrations of the dress, manners, morals and beliefs of the societies he has described. He has, however, made mention of literature, science, art, philosophy, etc., only in an incidental way. But he has presented not only the kings and the queens but also men and women of all degrees with their charm, beauty, scandal, and cruelties.

*Strabo's
remark*

Herodotus of course had no need to explain Greek geography to his Greek readers or Greek customs or political system. But what he had in mind was to describe the political situation at the relevant times, of many Greek cities. And this he did by means of digressions skilfully worked into the main narrative.

*Description
of the
political
situation of
his times*

There is a special feature of Herodotus' *History* which is of much importance and most remarkable. This was his love of and gift for story-telling. In other words, he loved to narrate history in the story-teller's manner. For this, he uses dialogues and speeches in the words of the speaker. In the first chapters of his *History* Herodotus began with a story told in this manner, of the accession of Gyges to the throne of Lydia—the first of the dynasty of kings of which Croesus was the fifth and the last. Such stories occur throughout his *History*. We can get an idea of Herodotus' outlook on life from the story of the conversation between Solon and Croesus. This story generalised the meaning of the Persian Wars, that great prosperity is 'a slippery thing', in other words *pride goes before a fall*. It has also been pointed out that for Herodotus man is a puppet of the omnipotent fate. This again will prove that his belief in *pride and fall*, loses its moral significance. For, 'if one is a puppet of fortune, one will have no occasion to correct himself, fate will override his

*His outlook
on life*

personal efforts. But it cannot be asserted that Herodotus did not believe in man's responsibility for his own actions.

*Qualities as
a historian*

The quality of Herodotus as historian lies in the fact that he had an eye for details as well as for the whole. 'A good geographer, and a man with an indefatigable interest in customs and past history of fellow men.' Herodotus was also man of tolerance without any bias for his own countryman as against the Persians. 'He was neither naive nor easily credulous. It is this which makes the first half of his work not only so readable but of such historical importance.' In the second half of his work 'he is largely writing military history'. But his detailed battle pieces are scarcely consistent. Yet the political meaning of the struggle between the great empire of Persia and small city-states of Greece, of the Battle of Marathon, has been brought out in his work. He believed that war, irrespective of victory or defeat brings undesirable consequences in its train. He remarks 'The ships which Athens sent to help the Ionians in their revolt were the beginning of suffering for Greeks and non-Greeks'. Herodotus' work despite all his mistakes, remains the leading work and he the leading authority not only for Greek history but for much of the history of Western Asia and of Egypt.

*His
importance
as a
historian*

*A pheno-
menon of
Greek
Enlighten-
ment*

12/Thucydides: Born of a rich Athenian who owned gold mines in Thrace and of a mother belonging to a distinguished family of Thrace, Thucydides was a phenomenon of the Greek Enlightenment. He was 'a descendant of the Sophists as Gibbon was a spiritual nephew of Bayle and Voltaire'. He received all the education then available in Greece and was influenced by scepticism. He kept a day to day record of the Peloponnesian War from the time of its outbreak but could not finish it up to the end. He suffered from plague in 430 B.C. himself and wrote a description of the malady. He was appointed one of the Generals in 424 B.C. to command a naval expedition to Thrace

*Varied ,
experiences*

but his failure to come in time to relieve the siege of Amphipolis led to his exile. The next twenty years were spent by him in travels mostly in the Peloponnese. He returned to Athens in 404 B.C. after the oligarchic revolution.

Thucydides opens his narrative where Herodotus had left off at the end of the Persian Wars. He prefaces his narrative with an introduction emphasising the importance of his subject and thence to prove that the war which he described was of greater importance than any other war waged by the Greeks. This was an obvious comparison with Herodotus whom he attacked without mentioning his name. As to the treatment of his subject he asserts that his narrative is no reproduction of others but results of his personal enquiries and his aims are not to amuse or please but relate facts for the future historians and to leave the guidance of precedent for future statesmanship.

His narrative begins where Herodotus left: result of personal enquiries

In his attempt to be at once brief, precise and profound, Thucydides writes at times in an involved and obscure style occasionally made all the more sombre by the use of Gorgian rhetoric, whose pupil he had been. But on occasions he is as terse and vivid as Tacitus and intensely dramatic as Euripides. As a rhetorician Thucydides displays refined and impressive qualities in the introduction of speeches into his history. He, however, yields accuracy to interest when he puts elegant speeches into the mouths of his characters. He admits that these speeches were imaginary but he prefers direct narration to explain and vivify personalities, ideas and events. Nevertheless the substance of the speeches are accurate. For instance the *Funeral Oration* of Pericles is one of finest grace and excellent words dwelling on the virtues of Pericles. But factually, Pericles was famous for simplicity of speech rather than for rhetoric. But Thucydides is not without his defects. He is severe and austere, lacks wit, humour and the vivacity of the Athenian spirit. He had his eyes a bit too much on the military details

His narrative sombre yet terse and vivid

Flare for fineness and vividness

Defects of Thucydides

*His impar-
tiality*

but makes no mention of any artist or any work of art. Writing for the future generations though, he tells us nothing of the constitutions of the Greek states or of the life of the cities or institutions of society. Further 'For an active politician and placeman, for an historian of his own times, for a Greek, Thucydides may be a miracle of impartiality, but he is not quite impartial'. He depreciates the historical importance of the *Persian War*, he is full of animosity against Cleon, turns his blind eye to the flaws of Pericles' statecraft. He forces his story into a rigid chronological frame and leans towards impersonal recording and the consideration of causes, developments and results. Thucydides writes as if he was an eye-witness or as one who has had occasion to hear things from an eye-witness or seen the documents. Yet, he has an extraordinary keenness for accuracy. He is fair to both sides. 'He is the father of scientific method in history.' His aims having been limited, his accuracy was the greatest. Even his topographical descriptions are surprisingly accurate. Thucydides was more in sympathy with oligarchy than democracy, but our greatest and most accurate information concerning the misdeeds of the oligarch is obtained from him. 'His sympathies were mainly with Pericles and his policy, his eulogy of which he has compressed into the funeral oration delivered by Pericles.' As the Cambridge historian remarks, Thucydides was a rationalist and his conception of historical methods is abundantly rationalistic. Although with the ability of a good psychologist Thucydides realised the importance of individual character in history, his narrative is highly impersonal and conforms to highly objective, annalistic, congruous and matter of fact standards. Further, 'Thucydides' world is a world of men; gods and women do not find place in his narrative. But his religious agnosticism has not diminished the quality of his history. He is austere and puritan in his outlook. 'Thucydides is a master, if not the author of mob psychology.'

*Father of
scientific
method in
history*

A rationalist

Austere

Thucydides is *modern*, for even though we may find

it hard to understand Dante or Milton, Thucydides or Euripides is 'kin to us mentally, and belongs to our age'.

*He is
'modern'*

'In general, posterity has accepted Thucydides at his own valuation. There are supplements to his history in the Inscriptions; in the extant comedies of Aristophanes; in later writers, more especially in Plutarch's lives of Pericles, Nicias, Alcibiades, Lysander; last not the least in the Aristotelian *Constitution of Athens*, which in particular calls for some readjustments in the story of the Revolution at Athens in 411 B. C. as narrated in unfinished Eighth Book, but Thucydides will never be dethroned as the sovran authority for the history of the years 433 to 411 B.C.'

*Sovran
authority*

13/Contrast between Herodotus and Thucydides: That Herodotus and Thucydides, despite their working on very different lines, 'were both alike creative, historians and literary artists, admits of no doubt'. The historical value of their works surpasses easy assessment. 'With Herodotus and Thucydides, History as an art was born, indeed twice born, in romantic and in classic perfection; and to their supremacy as a literary artists may be ascribed the triumphant survival of their works.' Yet there was much to be contrasted with between these two historians whose works supply us with a continuous narrative of the sixth and the fifth centuries Greek history.

*Both creative
historians*

First, while in Herodotus historiography has all the charm and vigour of youth, in Thucydides it has reached such a degree of maturity that has not been surpassed in any later age. 'The difference between the mind of Herodotus and that of Thucydides is almost the difference between adolescence and maturity.

*Historiography's
youth in
Herodotus—
Maturity in
Thucydides*

Secondly, Sophist philosophy had influenced Thucydides considerably and it was Sophism that distinguishes and separates Herodotus from Thucydides. Thucydides is 'a descendant of the Sophists as Gibbon

*Sophist
Philosophy
distinguishes
the two*

was a spiritual nephew of Bayle and Voltaire'. In fact, Thucydides was a phenomenon in the Greek Enlightenment.

Herodotus'
history—
Universal—
Thucydides'
limited

Thucydides
rationalist—
history
Anthropo-
logical
—Herodotus
misunderstood
history as
catalogues of
crimes and
follies

Herodotus'
inaccuracies:
Thucydides'
accuracy

Herodotus
Father of
History:
Thucydides
Father of
Scientific
History

Thirdly, Herodotus' work may be, although in a limited sense, regarded as *Universal history*, dealing with all nations of the Eastern Mediterranean, that of Thucydides is narrow, as it has only the *Peloponnesian War* as its subject matter. Yet while Thucydides takes a rationalist view of history and deals with the anthropological aspect of history presenting the actions and fortunes of political communities in the light political, economic and psychological factors, Herodotus makes his narrative at times no better than the register of the crimes, follies and misfortunes of mankind. Thucydides excludes women from his pages, Herodotus enlivens his pages with their scandals, their beauty and their cruelties. For this Strabo remarked 'there is much nonsense in Herodotus'.

Fourthly, the vast field that Herodotus covered made him to err on many occasions and many affairs. He could not get over the contemporary prejudices and superstitions. Although his account is patriotic yet it is never unjust and has many praises of the Persians. But as he depended on foreign informants many inaccuracies crept into his narrative and he thought that Nebuchadnezzar was a woman and the Alps a river. 'He swallows many superstitions, records many miracles, quotes Oracles piously, and darkens his pages with omens and auguries.' Thucydides on the other hand depended on his personal enquiries. He had a keen conscience for accuracy, even his geography has been verified in details.

Fifthly, Herodotus wrote partly to entertain and amuse the educated readers but Thucydides wrote to furnish information for future historians, and the guidance of precedent for future statesmanship. If Cicero is correct in calling Herodotus *Father of History*, Thucydides must be regarded as the *Father of Scientific*

History. Thucydides' history is anthropomorphic, analytical, chronological and rational.

Sixthly, while Herodotus wrote in terms of personalities rather than processes in his feeling that historical processes works through personalities Thucydides although recognising the role of exceptional personalities in history such as a Pericles, an Alcibiades or a Nicias, leans to impersonal recording and the consideration of causes, developments and results.

Herodotus' leant towards personalities — Thucydides to processes

Seventhly, Thucydides' agnostic, austere, puritanic outlook made his narrative somewhat sombre and lacked the vivacity and wit of the Athenian spirit, but Herodotus had mixed a romantic story-telling quality in his narrative. 'When political events have passed through the brain of Herodotus they come out as delightful stories. With the insatiable curiosity of an inquirer, he has little political insight; he has the instinct of a literary artist, his historical methods are rudimentary.' But Thucydides' narrative, 'severe in its reserves, written from purely intellectual point of view, unencumbered with platitudes and moral judgments, cold and critical' showed the greatest quality of dramatic and narrative art as well as of historical criticism.

Herodotus' narrative delightful — Thucydides' sombre cold and intellectual

Appreciation of Herodotus and Thucydides have sometimes suffered due to the exaggerated notions about the two regarding Herodotus a child of Nature producing his great work without any conscious design, without any forethought and simply in sport, and Thucydides as an incarnation of scientific narrative and of scientific spirit. Although there is some justification of the above remarks, these are much too superficial. For while Herodotus cannot be denied his position in the school of history by regarding him as an anecdote-monger, Thucydides likewise cannot be denied the position of a literary artist. Both Herodotus and Thucydides are mutually indispensable and complementary, one depicting the great deliverance

Conclusion

of the Greeks from the Persians, the other depicting the 'fundamental dualism underlying the Hellenic order, its hegemonic rivalries, centrifugal ambitions, class wars, insular atomism, treacheries, disloyalties and disintegrations'. Both are alike 'creative historians and consummate literary artists'.

Origins

14/Attic Drama: A Resume: Attic dramas, both tragic and comic were offshoots of the rural festival of Dionysus. Pisistratus, the Tyrant of Athens built a new temple for Bacchic god Dionysus and instituted a new festival called the Great Dionysia; the chief feature of the festival was choir of Satyr, the attendants of God who danced in ship skin and masks and sang their goat song. In course of time 'the goat song of the days of Pisistratus grew into the tragedy of Aeschylus'. During the fifth and the fourth centuries B.C. theatres arose in Eretria, Epidauros, Argos, Marínea, Delphi, Syracuse, etc., but it was on the Dionysian stage that the major tragedies and comedies were first played. These dramas fought out the bitterest phase of the conflict 'between the old theology and new philosophy, which binds into one vast process of thought and changes the mental history of the Periclean age'.

Structure of the theatre

The great theatre on which the Attic dramas were staged was open to the sky with fifteen thousand seats rising in tiers in a semi-circular form towards Parthenon, facing Mt. Hymetus and the sea. It was thus in a great natural setting that the plays were staged. There was a realistic scene when the actors would invoke either the sun, sky, stars or the ocean. At the foot of the auditorium was an orchestra or dancing space and at the rear there was a skene or scene which was a wooden building representing a palace or a private dwelling as suited the action of the play. Furniture, dress, etc., were used as the story might require. There was a revolving arrangement by which different scenes painted on a prism, might be shown as according to need. There was also a *mechane*, i.e. machine, to lower gods or heroes from above.

The tragic drama in Athens used to be staged as a part of the annual celebration of the feast of Dionysus as also at the time of lesser Dionysia or Lenaea. Each of the ten tribes of Attica used to choose one of its rich citizens to serve as the director of the chorus and would bear the cost of the play. This was regarded as a privilege and might win a prize on the merit of the play. Usually, the dramatist himself would train up the choir, the chorus being the most important and costly part of the play. But the dominant position of the chorus was gradually lost under Thespis and Aeschylus and the number of actors was increased and after Aeschylus rose to fifteen. They would sing, dance, act and through their motion interpret the words and moods of the play. Next to action and words came music which was usually produced by the dramatist himself. Singing was simple, accompanied only by flute. 'These plays cannot be judged by reading them silently; to the Greeks the words are but a complex art form that weaves poetry, music, acting, and the dance into a profound and moving unity.' Acting was the most important part of the play and on its success prizes were won. The incomes of the leading actors were very high and others quite low. Fluctuating between luxury and poverty, moving from place to place, the actors were incapable of normal life and their morals were what might be expected in the circumstances.

In both tragedies and comedies, the actors wore masks fitted with a thin brass diaphragm for making the voice louder. Facial expressions could not be seen by the audience. The masks which had their origins in religious performances found their place in the stage. These were made as instruments of horror or humour.

Citizens, men and women were equally interested in the play. Two *obols* were required for entrance. Sitting arrangements for men and women were separate. The audience would eat nuts, and fruits and

Dramas staged during the Great and the Small Dionysia

Directors of chorus, dancers, singers

Chorus lost its importance

Acting most important of the play

Condition of the actors

Use of masks

The audience

Prizes

drink wine as it listened to the play. The amount of food eaten during a presentation of the play, as Aristotle humorously proposed, was the measure of success or failure of the play. Clappings, shoutings, hissings, kicking of benches, throwing of stones, figs, etc., were resorted to by the audience according to their reactions to the play. Deliberate noise would sometimes bring the play to abrupt end. During the three days of the Dionysian festival five plays, three tragedies, one satyr play and a comedy would be staged every day. In early days, the prize for the best tragedy was a goat and for the best comedy a basket of figs and a jug of wine. But in the fifth century three money prizes for tragedies and one money prize for comedy were given.

*Main theme
—fate*

‘The Greek drama is a study of fate or of man in conflict with gods; Elizabethans drama is a study of action, or of man in conflict with himself.’ Throughout the works of Aeschylus and Sophocles the theme is the ‘nemesis of punishment, by jealous gods or impersonal fate, for insolent presumption and irrelevant pride; and the recurring moral is the wisdom of conscience, honour, and a modest moderation. It is this combination of philosophy with poetry, action, music, song, dance that makes the Greek drama not only a new form in the history of literature, but one that almost at the outset achieves a grandeur never equalled again’.

*Aeschylus’
Prometheus
Bound*

Aeschylus was the creator of *Attic Tragedy*. In his *Suppliants* we see him as a master dramatist. He introduced a second actor and dramatic dialogue in the play. It was from his tune and due to him that chorus which occupied a dominant position in the Greek drama lost its position and action took its place. He wrote seventy, ninety according to some, dramas of which only seven are extant of which again *Prometheus Bound* is the most famous and the *Oresteia* the greatest. Fragments of *Prometheus Unbound* have survived which show the work to be a quite different combination.

The theme of Prometheus is excellent. He is bound at the bidding of Zeus to a rock for teaching men the art of making fire. Hanging helpless on a crag Prometheus like Satan in Milton's *Paradise lost*, hurls defiance at Zeus Olympus and in pride recounts how he brought civilisation to the primitive men by teaching them the art of fire but mourns: 'And I who did devise for mortals all these arts, have no device left now to save myself'. The whole earth shares his sorrow and mourns with him.

Oresteia has been regarded as the greatest of the Greek drama and perhaps of all drama—the finest achievement of the Aeschylus. The theme is violence begotten by violence and the inescapable punishment of insolent pride and excess, for generation after generation. Agamemnon married Clytaemnestra who bore him two daughters Iphigenia and Electra and a son Orestes. Agamemnon sacrificed Iphigenia to induce the wind to blow on way to Troy in his ship. Clytaemnestra was wooed by Aegisthus during Agamemnon's absence and both plotted to kill Agamemnon on his return, which they did.

*Theme of
Oresteia*

In 468 B.C. Sophocles a new-comer won the first prize for tragedy. He wrote 113 plays of which only seven have survived including his *Oedipus the King*, *Oedipus Tyrannus*. Oedipus learnt from the oracle that he would kill his father and marry his mother. He fled from the country Corinth believing the King and Queen of Corinth to be his father and mother. He killed an old man on his way to Thebes not knowing that it was his father. He answered the Sphinx which put the riddle to him and as per promise, the Sphinx killed herself. The Thebans in joy made Oedipus their King and according to custom gave their Queen in marriage to him. Four children were born and then to his horror he knew that his wife was his mother. When the identification is complete his mother kills herself and in remorse Oedipus pulls out his own eyes and leaves Thebes as an exile.

Sophocles

*Theme of
Oedipus the
King*

Euripides

Aeschylus cleared and set the form for Greek drama with his harsh verse and stern philosophy, Sophocles fashioned the art with measured music and placid wisdom and Euripides completed development in his works. 'Aeschylus was a preacher . . . Sophocles a classic artist . . . Euripides a romantic poet who could never write a perfect play because he was distracted by philosophy.'

Euripides' works

Author of seventy-five plays beginning with *The Daughters of Pelias* (455 B.C.) to *The Bacchae* (406 B.C.) of which eighteen are extant. His *Hippolytus* is the first love tragedy in extant literature. In the *Medea* he transforms the story of Argonauts into a powerful play. But Aristotle observes that these plays fall far short of the dramatic technique and the standards set by Aeschylus and Sophocles.

High standard of Greek tragedies

The Attic Tragedies are more sombre than the Elizabethan tragedies, for they seldom bring comic relief to the audience through any humorous interruption in the play. The Greek dramatists liked to keep the tragedies on a high plane.

Growth of independent comedies

15/**Comedies:** There flourished many comic dramatists before Aristophanes. Cratinus, Pherecrates were forerunners of Aristophanes. Eupolis was his ablest competitor. The comedies, at first followed tragedies on the stage as a Satyr play. But gradually comic drama became independent of tragedies and a day would be allotted to it for being staged when three or four comedies would be held on the same day and would compete for a separate prize.

Aristophanes

Aristophanes who belonged to a rich cultured family had his natural sympathies for the aristocracy and a hatred for democracy. In a lost play, *The Babylonians* parts of which survive, Aristophanes subject Cleon and his policies to such stinging ridicule that he was prosecuted and fined. In his *The Knight* through an allegory he ridiculed Cleon and democracy. Aristophanes reluctance for war is seen in his *The Acharnians*

in which he sees no reason for war with Sparta and would like to have a treaty signed for peace. In his *The Peace* the poet was triumphant, Cleon was dead and Nicias was about to sign the Peace of Nicias with Sparta. Politics and religion were the dominant features of the works of Aristophanes. The two basic factors that wrought the ruin of the Athenian public life, according to him, were democracy and irreligion.

His works

‘Aristophanes is an unclassified mixture of beauty, wisdom, and filth. When the mood is upon him he can write lyrics of purest Greek serene, which no translator has ever yet conveyed.’ In the vitality of his style he belongs to the class of Rabelais, Shakespeare and Dickens. His works are of much historical value. Yet his humours are generally of low order. ‘Coming to him after any Greek author—worst of all after Euripides—he seems depressingly vulgar and we find it difficult to imagine the same audience enjoying them both.’ Yet in his writings he had the insight to see in the trend of religion and morals to scepticism and Epicurean individualism the basic dangers to Athenian life and society.

*Quality of
his works*

CHAPTER 13

Art and Architecture of Periclean Greece

*Reason of
Greek art*

'Greek art is reason made manifest. Greek painting is the logic of line, Greek sculpture is a worship of symmetry, Greek architecture is a marble geometry.'

*Greek feeling
for Symmetry
and all that
art meant*

The Greeks had an extraordinary feeling for proportion and order, for form and rhythm, for precision and clarity. To a Greek art was a supplement and was subordinate to life. It was not art for arts' sake. 'I would not choose the power of the Persian King' was no empty exclamation of an Athenian. He meant it as did every Greek and particularly Athenians of Periclean age. The good, useful and the beautiful were closely bound together in the thought of a Greek as was in Socratic philosophy. The Greek took a utilitarian view of art and beauty.

*Utilitarian
bias of Greek
art*

The Athenians under Pericles, and in fact every Greek, had a sense of belonging to the state and they identified themselves with the glory of the city and a thousand artists worked for the beautification its public places, to commemorate victory, to honour gods or goddesses, to ennoble its festivals. Naturally, the Greek arts of the fifth century were not meant for the museums but for the actual interest of the people. The Greek artists were not recluses working in silence away into the studios of their own but they were artisans who toiled with their labourers in workshops. 'Athens brought together, from all the Greek world, a greater concourse of artists, as well as of philosophers and poets than, any other city except Renaissance Rome.'

The Greeks were expert cutters and engravers of metals and gems. Their work was so fine and delicate that a microscope is needed to see the details. Copper and silver wares, Greek mirrors, Greek potteries

carrying figures of men, women, gods and goddesses are a class by themselves. Figure carving style reached its zenith in the first half of the fifth century in the *Achilles and Penthesilea*, *Aesop and the Fox*, *Orpheus among the Thracians*, etc. The most eminent of the vase painters in the Periclean age were Brygus, Sotades and Meidias. They chose scenes from actual life for depicting on the vases. Light and shade effects were also produced by them, showing the contours and depths of figures including the folds of feminine drapery.

Greek vases

*Vase
Paintings.
Brygus,
Sotades and
Meidias*

In sculpture the Greeks had their greatest delight. The Greeks filled their homes, temples, public places, their graves with terra-cotta statuettes and images of gods and goddesses of stone. The sculptors' sense of proportion, knowledge of human anatomy made stone statues life like. The restraint exercised by the sculptors is of special nature and even the most romantic expressions show the classical restraint at its best. The Periclean sculptor shows a marvellous understanding of the physical forms and shapes in different postures. The Greek sculptor uses a variety of materials to work upon—stone, terra-cotta, wood, bronze, marble, silver, gold, ivory, etc.

Sculpture

The Greek sculpture in the fifth century recorded so great achievements because the sculptors belonged to a school and long line of masters and pupils carried the art and handed it down to the next generation. In Periclean Athens five schools performed these functions. These were the schools of Rhegium, Aegina, Sicyon, Argos and Attica. One Pythagoras of Samos who came over to Rhegium cast a *Philoctetes* which was so wonderful in its expressions of passion, pain and old age that Greek sculptors began to imitate him. At Argos the sculptural technique begun by Ageladas reached its apex in Polycleitus who became famous by designing the temple of Hera, and a gold and ivory statue of the matron goddess. Pheidias, Cresilas, and Phradmon were the renowned sculptors. Polycleitan canon of sculpture became almost a law

*Different
schools of
Sculpture*

*Polycleitan
canon of
Sculpture*

with the sculptors of the Peloponnesus, and even Pheidias was partially influenced by him. Polycleitan sculpture represented strength and vigour than grace. But it was Praxiteles who overthrew Polycleitan system and begun the rival canon of tall, slim elegance which survived *via* Rome throughout Christian Europe.

The most famous statue made by Polycleitus was that of a male *Discus Thrower* which showed every sign of an athlete at the job, including posture, tension of the muscle, tendons, etc. Myron's *Athena and Marsyas*, and *Ladas* were excellent achievements. His statues were so life like that his carved *Heifer*, the Greeks said could do everything but moo. The Attic school was, however, particularly important for it gave beauty, tenderness, delicacy and grace to sculpture.

*Pheidias:
His Athene
Parthenos*

Pheidias was first a painter then became a pictorial sculpture. He also studied bronze technique of Ageladas. Patiently, Pheidias made himself master of every branch of his art. His *Athene Parthenos* stood thirty-eight feet high in the interior of the Parthenon as the virgin goddess of wisdom and chastity. It was made of ivory and gold, and adorned with precious metals. The statue was placed in such a way that sun would shine through the great door directly upon the brilliant drapery and face of the virgin and would be seen from miles on the sea. Pheidias was in favour of large size statues. His seated Zeus was sixty feet high. The work was listed among the Seven Wonders of the world.

*His
seated Zeus*

*Pheidias'
pupils*

After Pheidias his work was carried on by his pupils with equal success. Alcamenes made an *Aphrodite of the Gardens*, Agoracritus made the famous *Nemesis*. These were regarded as highest masterpieces of statuary. In Pheidias and his followers, art had earned perfection, strength was reconciled with beauty, 'feeling with restraint, motion with repose, flesh and bone with mind and soul'.

It is possible to trace clear divisions in the growth

of painting in Greece. In the six century B.C. painting was mainly ceramic, devoted mainly to the task of decorating vases. In the fifth it became architectural, painting public buildings, statutes, etc. In the next it became domestic, decorating dwelling houses, making portraits. Polygnotus was as famous as a painter as Pheidias as a sculptor or even Ictinus as an architect. At the bidding of Cimon he painted the public buildings with murals. His *Sack of Troy*, *The Rape of the Leucippidae*, *Odysseus in Hades*, etc., are masterpieces of the classical art of painting. By the end of the fifth century painting had advance sufficiently and Panaenus, brother of Pheidias succeeded in making recognisable portraits of the Athenian and Persian generals in his *Battle of Marathon*. Agatharchus was employed by Aeschylus and Sophocles to paint the scenes of the plays and he using light and shade created an effect of nearness and distance in the scenery. Anaxagoras and Democritus look up a scientific attitude and made the use of light and shade more effective. The supreme figure of the Greek painting in the fifth century was Zeuxis, pupil of Apollodorus. He gave away many of his masterpieces to kings and cities as gifts on the ground that no price would do them justice. Parrhasius of Ephesus was the only rival of Zeuxis. Zeuxis' *Runner*, his mural of *The People of Athens* were most faithful representations of the realities.

Painting:

Polygnotus

Panaenus

Agatharchus

*Anaxagoras,
Democritus*

Zeuxis

Of the many temples and buildings that bore the excellence of the architectural skill of the Greeks in the fifth century only a few Ionic temples—chiefly the *Erectheum* and the temple of *Nike Apteros* on the Acropolis survive. Attic architecture remained mainly Doric, yielding to Ionic insofar as the inner columns of the *Propylae*, and a frieze around the *Theseum* and the *Parthenon*. The architects of Parthenon were Ictinus and Callicrates, the *Propylae* the work of Minesicles. The whole Greek world was busy in building temples in this period and the statuary and architectural competition and rivalry between them

*Architecture:
Erectheum.
Nike. Propylae,
Theseum.
Parthenon*

*Doric and
classical
simplicity*

*Knowledge
of
Mathematics*

*Statuary
carvings*

*Attractive
frieze*

made the cities almost bankrupt. The Parthenon cost seven hundred talents, i.e. \$4,200,000.* In one generation Athens was rebuilt after the damages done to it in the Persian War. New council chambers rose, new homes, new porticoes were built, new wharves, new ports, etc., were also constructed. A mile North-West of the Acropolis smaller Parthenon known as *Theseum*, i.e. the temple of Theseus, was built. Ictinus aided by Callicrates worked under the general supervision of Pheidias and Pericles. In the Western end of the structure a room was built for the maiden priestesses, called the *room of the virgins* or *ton parthenon*. White marble from Mt. Pentelicus was chosen by Ictinus as his material for the temple, no mortar was used. Each block of marble was so chiselled and sized that when placed on the other the two looked like one. Such was also done in case of the columns. The style of the Parthenon was purely Doric and of classic simplicity. The design was rectangular as was always chosen by the Greeks. Polycleitan canon of architecture was observed and the dimension was fixed at $228 \times 101 \times 65$ ft. For creating optical illusions metopes were adjusted in such a manner as to appear square although they were not so. This needed advanced knowledge of Mathematics and optics. The Parthenon had some technical features which made it a combination of science and art. High reliefs depicting wars of the Greeks and the Trojans, Greeks and the Amazons, Lapiths and Centaurs, giants and gods. Over the entrance were statuary carvings showing birth of Athena, a fine figure of Iris, the female Hermes with clothes clinging yet blown by the wind and many others. Here was also *Hebe*, the goddess of youth, and the figures of *Fates*. In the left corner four horses' heads with flashing eyes, foaming mouths and snorting nostrils, in the right corner the moon driving her chariot to her setting, drawn by horses. These eight horses are the finest in sculptural history. Likewise on the pediments of different sides are statues of men and women adding to the magnificence of the Parthenon.

But more attractive are the figures of men and women on the frieze. For 525 feet along the top wall within the portico ran this famous reliefs showing the youths and maids of Athens bearing homage to Athena. Seldom have men, women or animals been honoured with such painstaking art. Interior of the building was rather narrow; the roof was supported by double-storyed colonnades. The marble tiles of the roof were made thin so as to admit some light. The cornices were decorated with careful details. 'Today, shorn of its colours, the Parthenon is most beautiful at night, when through every columned space come changing vistas of sky or the ever worshipful moon or the lights of the sleeping city mingling with the stars.'

*Most
beautiful
at night
even today*

Yet the Greek sculpture was too physical and architecture narrowly limited to simple rectangle of Mycenaean type. In secular field these achieved almost nothing. There was no vaults, no archs. The essence of the Greek style was order and form content with simplicity. But 'we shall find instruction and stimulus in that art which was the life of reason in form and in that classic style which was the most characteristic gift of Greece to mankind.'

Defects

*Yet a great
gift to
mankind*

On the south-western slope of the Acropolis Periclean artists erected an *Odeum* or Music Hall which was a unique achievement of architectural skill for its cone-shaped dome. On the southern bastion Callicrates raised a miniature Ionic temple to Athena as *Nike Apteros* or Wingless Victory, the exterior of which was decorated with elegant figures. These figures of Victory called *Nikai* were the works of Pheidias, less massive than Athena of Parthenon but more graceful. Specially *Victory* tying her sandals is one of the triumphs of Greek art. The Acropolis was with five openings before each of which there was a Doric portico. Within these gates was the *Erechtheum*, not more than half of which could be completed when the disaster of

Erechtheum

*Its
decorations*

Aegospotami ruined Athens. On the two wings of the construction one was dedicated to Athene Polias whose temple was destroyed during the Persian War and the other wing was dedicated to Erechtheus and Poseidon. The Erechtheum was strangely Oriental in its make up, it was one of the strangest works of Greek architecture. There is an opinion that it was a completed structure but its peculiar shape was due to the necessity of including a number of ancient sanctuaries on a very irregular piece of ground. It was begun on the eve of the Peloponnesian War and finished some time between 409 and 406 B.C. after a long interval. It was an Ionic structure with Ionic columns and rectangular cella. The 'elaborate details of the decorations which are of incomparable elegance and charm but for all its beauty, it is depressing to look at the Erechtheum after the Parthenon and the Propylaea'. Columns with Attic bases and decorated neck-bands have extremely elaborate capitals. The capitals were adorned with inlaid glass and gilt bronze. The most noteworthy features of the Erechtheum were the extremely elaborate ornamental carvings.

Lyrics

Contribution of Greece to World Literature:

Fifth century B.C. was the Golden Age of Greece, an Age of Illumination. Athens became the intellectual capital of Greece. The individual initiative that the Athenian democracy had given rise to not only showed itself in politics and development of economy but in the field of creative art. The sixth century B.C. was, however richer in lyric poetry because of the aristocratic patronage which had decayed in the fifth century making lyrics rather poor in comparison. Pindar was a transitional figure in this regard. Lyrics apart, Pindar composed music for chorus, hymns, paeans, dirges, songs of victory, etc. If Pindar, Simonides and Bacchylides had given to the posterity what late in Europe took the form of Sonata, the Dionysian dramatists gave Europe the forms of Tragedies and Comedies.

A genius does not normally arise at the outset. Many a talent precede the genius. So also was the case with the master playwright Aeschylus. From Thespis to Aeschylus many lesser playwrights had intervened. But Aeschylus arose to dominate the Athenian literature for a generation. It was he who had moulded the Greek drama into its classic form which was copied in the Western literature till we reach the age of Shakespeare. Not only his *Prometheus Bound*, *Oedipus the King*, etc., supplied the theme for many a writer of the West, but the classical form of the drama in which destiny ruled held good till we reach the sixteenth century when Shakespeare made *Character destiny*. Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, enriched the literature of the Greek *Golden Age* but left a storehouse of literary models for the posterity. The dramatic technique of Euripides, according to Aristotle fell far short of the standards set by Aeschylus and Sophocles. Euripides' *Medea*, *Hippolytus*, and *The Bacche* cannot compare with the structural integrity of *Oresteia* or the complex unity of *Oedipus the King*. The three unities of Aristotle—unity of time, unity of place and unity of action—as exemplified in Aeschylean tragedies set the standard for Europe. Comic poet Aristophanes dramatised the contemporary political and socio-economic situations and through, sometimes vulgar humours, castigated his political opponents and warned against democracy and irreligion which, according to him were causing disintegration of the Athenian public life.

Tragedies

Comedies

If Greece gave the West their first tragic and comic dramatists, their first lyric poets, she also gave the first historians. Herodotus was the *father of history* while Thucydides was the *father of scientific history*. Herodotus was the first historian whose works have come down to us, but historiography reached its maturity in Thucydides. Thucydides is regarded as one of the phenomena of the Greek Enlightenment

History

All this was a rich heritage, if not in quantity certainly in quality and form. 'Form and order are the

A rich heritage

essence of the classic style in literature as well as in art'. Persistent effort to subordinate fancy to reason is the dominant quality of the Greek mind and of Greek literature. 'Therefore Greek literature is *modern* or rather contemporary; we find it hard to understand Dante or Milton, but Eurypides and Thucydides are kin to us mentally, and belong to our age.'

CHAPTER 14

Supplementary Topics

1/Spartan Institutions in the Fifth Century B.C.: Noted for their conservatism, the Spartans retained the old order of things that existed in the days of Homer, even in the fifth century B.C. The most striking of these survivals was the dual kingship.

Survival of old order of things

The mechanism of the Spartan constitution comprised four distinct parts: two Kings, Council called *Gerusia*, Assembly called *Apella* and Five Overseers called the Ephors.

Constitution: Four parts

There were two kings at Sparta simultaneously. Union of two distinct communities with their kings perhaps was the origin of the dual kingship that existed in Sparta. The system was by itself one of checks and balances, one acting as a check on the other. The original powers of the kings in Sparta were abolished but not the institution. They were reduced to a mere magistracy. It must have been the result of the general trend of transformation of kingship into aristocratic republics in different parts of Greece. Of their original powers and functions only some were retained. It was the privilege of the kings to offer Solemn sacrifices for the city to Apollo, to hold certain priesthoods. They would also offer necessary sacrifices before a war or anything of great importance. They were the high-priests.

Dual kingship

Powers of Priests

As the supreme commanders of the army, they had the power of declaring war or peace, and to lead armies to battles and to have powers of life and death while in the battle-field. It was the custom to send one of the two kings to the battle-field and the other to remain in the city.

Military functions: Supreme Commanders

Their functions as judges were limited to judging cases relating to adoption, marriage and public roads.

Judicial functions

Social status

Socially, the kings had the highest honour. In public ceremonies they had the highest place of honour. In banquets they occupied the first seats, were served first. On death they were shown highest honour. Horsemen would carry the information of the king's death all over the country and mourning dress would be worn by a man and a woman of each family. The kings were succeeded by their eldest sons. In case of failure of an heir the nearest male would succeed.

Gerusia
—*Council*
of Elders:
its functions

Next to the king was the *Council of Elders* called *Gerusia* consisting of thirty members including two Kings as *ex-officio*. The other twenty-eight members must be of sixty years of age. They held office for life and chosen by the General Assembly of the people. Persons of high integrity and moral virtues would be chosen and, in fact, it was in recognition of merits that one would be chosen a member. It was in the nature of an advisory body. It prepared matters which were to come before the Popular Assembly, held a great influence over the political affairs of the country and functioned as highest criminal court. But most peculiar feature of the council was that which its members were chosen by the people, they were not to be chosen from the people. They must be men of noble birth. This gave an oligarchical touch to the Spartan constitution.

Apella—
The Popular
Assembly:
its powers
and functions

The General Assembly of the people comprised all persons who had attained the age of thirty. It was called *Apella*. The Assembly, however, had no power of initiative or debate. It could either approve or reject a proposal placed before it by the kings or ephors. The sessions of the Assembly could be summoned originally by the kings but later on by the *Ephors*. Election of magistrates, members of the *Gerusia*, determining the questions of peace and war, and foreign politics fell within their competence. They also decided questions of disputed succession to the kingship. The decision of the *Apella* was supreme. But in case a wrong decision was taken by the Assembly, the *Gerusia* or the *Ephors* had the power to annul it.

The most characteristic part of the Spartan constitution was the institution of Five Ephors. How this institution had originated is not known. It is possible that in a struggle for power between the people on the one hand and the kings and the nobility on the other, the institution of Five Ephors as representatives of the people emerged. That the Ephors were representatives of the people can be understood from their election by the people, from all the Spartans. They were the guardians of the rights of the people, they watched the conduct of the kings, accompanied the king in times of war, could call the kings to appear before them to explain their conduct. They also shared the judicial functions, originally belonging to the kings, with the Gerusia. The Ephors constituted the highest civil court. In certain cases they could also try criminal cases. They were particularly responsible for the maintenance of order and discipline among the people.

*Five
Ephors*

*Their
powers and
functions*

The nature of the Spartan constitution was such as would not admit of being called either a kingship, oligarchy or democracy. In fact it was a mixture of all the three. Ostensibly it was a kingship as there were two kings at the head, constitutionally it was a democracy as the *Apella* or the Popular Assembly was supreme. But in reality it was oligarchic as the Council of Elders drawn from the nobility exercised important influence on politics and could override the decisions of the Assembly. It was a mixed constitution.

*Character of
the consti-
tution:
Mixture of
kingship,
democracy
and oligarchy*

2/Society: The Spartan state comprised the Spartiates or the Spartans who were the Dorian conquerors. They were the highest class of the society. Below the Spartans came the *Perioeci* composed mainly of the Dorians with an admixture of the earlier inhabitants. They were free men, and enjoyed local independence but had no political rights. The Dorians of Sparta or the Spartiates and the Perioeci scattered in the towns throughout Laconia and were together called *Lacedaemonians* a term which was also used to denote either class separately.

*Spartans or
Spartiates*

Perioeci

The Helots

The lowest class called the *Helots* or serfs bound to the soil was the creation of the Dorian conquerors. They were mostly the local people whom the Dorian conquerors had dispossessed and reduced to the status of serfs. They cultivated the land for their lords. A portion of the produce was allowed to be retained by them. The *Helots* were employed as light-armed troops and as servants to the Spartans and as oarsmen in ships and only rarely as hoplites. Although not exactly slaves and with liberty to acquire private property, the lot of the *Helots* was very hard and they were always bitterly dissatisfied and lay in wait for the misfortunes of their lords. The system of *Helotry* thus was a source of danger and to keep an eye on them, the Spartans employed secret police in them. This secret police system was known as *Krypteia*.

Krypteia

*Cavalry,
archers,
heavy and
light-armed
troops and
navy*

3/The Army: The Spartan military organisation consisted of cavalry, archers, heavy-armed troops or hoplites, light-armed troops and the navy. The insular position Sparta naturally led her to emphasise the development of the land-forces more than the navy. Spartan discipline was proverbial. Being numerically inferior to the sons of the soil whom the Spartans were ruling over, necessitated their turning every individual into a finished soldier. From the age of seven till the age of sixty a Spartan lived in barracks enduring every hardship that a soldier's life would be faced with. At the age of twenty he would enter upon military service and would be permitted to marry, but would be required to live in the barracks. A Spartan would be free to live domestic life after the attainment of sixty years of age. The Spartan women were also trained and drilled to become fit to bear strong children. Their sacrifice of maternal instinct for the sake of state was proverbial.

*Spartan
discipline—
proverbial*

4/Corcyraean Speech in the Athenian Assembly: The Corcyraeans began their speech in the Athenian Assembly by explaining the reason why Corcyra had never in the whole of her past history been willing to ally herself with any of her neighbours.

Their past policy of isolation was prompted by a feeling of avoiding involvement which might not be of their own seeking. But they confessed, this was inexpedient as was proved now that Corinth was about to pounce upon her with a vast navy although in an earlier engagement Corcyra had beaten a Corinthian squadron off the Corcyraean shores. It was not out of any sinister motive that the Corcyraeans were now willing to reverse their former policy of non-alignment, but it was due to the realisation that their former policy was the consequence of an error in judgment.

*Explanation
for reversing
the former
policy of
isolation*

The Corcyraeans sought Athenian help precisely on four grounds: *First*, it would be rendering help to a power which was a victim of injustice. Obviously, the Corcyraean envoy wanted Athens to come to the assistance of the victim and thereby right the wrong. *Secondly*, this would earn the gratitude of the Corcyraeans since the help rendered by Athens would save all that the Corcyraeans held valuable from the hands of the Corinthians. *Thirdly*, Corcyra was next to Athens as a naval power, and to receive Corcyra in alliance would give Athens the support of the Corcyraean navy. This offer by itself was a stroke of good fortune, for Athenian accession to further naval strength would come without any effort or expense on her part. *Fourthly*, there was no reason to suppose that it would be long before Athens would derive the advantage of the added strength of her navy, for war with Lacedaemon was not far off. 'The Lacedaemon regards you with jealousy and desires war, and Corinth is powerful there.' In the circumstances Athens must accept Corcyra in alliance and both should form plans against Lacedaemon instead of waiting to defeat the plans she forms against them.

*Corcyraean
arguments
for Athenian
help*

The Corcyraean envoy then proceeds to meet the possible objections to Athenian acceptance of Corcyra into an alliance that may be raised by Corinth. Should Corinth assert that to receive her colony into alliance by Athens was not right it should be made clear to her

*Corcyraean
envoy meets
the possible
arguments
of Corinth
against
Athens'
receiving
Corcyra in
alliance*

that colonies well treated by the mother country honour her. But they are estranged when treated with injustice. Such was the case with Corinth. Corinth was injuring Corcyra. She did not accept the proposal of referring the dispute between Corcyra and Epidamnus to arbitration, on the contrary she proceeded to war. 'Let their conduct towards us who are their kindred be a warning to you not to be misled by their deceit.' 'Concessions to adversaries only end in self-reproach, and the more strictly they are avoided the greater will be the chance of security.'

*Not to accept
Corcyra in
alliance
because of
the Thirty
Years'
Peace—
would be
an act of
political
immorality*

As to the question whether Athens' receiving Corcyra in alliance would constitute a breach of the Thirty Years' Peace, the Corcyraean envoy pointed out that there was a specific provision that it would be competent for any of the parties to receive any neutral Hellenic state to join whichever side it pleased. To allow Corinth to obtain men for her navy from the entire Hellas and in no small number from the Athenian subjects even, and at the same time to exclude Corcyra from any alliance that the terms of the *Thirty Years' Peace* would allow, would be not only unjust but an act of political immorality.

*Unjust not
to help
Corcyra
but to allow
Corinth
collect war
materials
from
Athenian
dependencies*

Further, it would also be unjust on the part of Athens not to agree to an alliance with Corcyra while the latter was in peril and while it was not an enemy of Athens and to allow Corinth which was an aggressor and enemy of Athens and was drawing war materials from the dependencies of Athens. It would be an act of discrimination on the part of Athens to allow Corinth to enlist men from the Athenian dependencies but not to come to Corcyra's assistance.

*To take
Corcyra
into alliance
would be
to stand
against a
common enemy*

But the most vital argument was that the power i.e. Corinth which was at enmity with Corcyra was also at enmity with Athens. In other words, it was just a step against the common enemy when Athens would come to the assistance of Corcyra.

This apart, Athens, being a naval power, it should

be her endeavour to prevent if possible the existence of any other naval power, or at least to enlist the alliance of the strongest naval power besides herself that existed. The Corcyraean envoy also argued that even if admitting Corcyra to an Athenian alliance constituted a breach of Thirty Years' Peace, it would make Athens formidable against her enemy. But if she would forsake Corcyraean alliance out of fear lest Thirty Years' Peace would be broken, she would be no terror for a strong enemy. A war with Corinth and her ally Sparta was in the horizon and not to take Corcyra into alliance would be weakening Athens herself for Corcyra occupied a strategic position lying conveniently for coastal navigation in the direction of Italy and Sicily being able to bear the passage of naval reinforcement from thence to Peloponnesus or *vice versa*.

Corcyra a power—her friendship essential for a naval power like Athens

Strategic position of Corcyra

To refuse Corcyra would be a folly from both general and particular considerations. There being three considerable naval power in the Hellas---Athens, Corcyra and Corinth. Athens and Corcyra on the same side would hold the sea easily against the enemies, while Corinth winning Corcyra by force would hold the seas for Peloponnesus against Athens.

Question of naval balance

It goes without saying that the arguments of the Corcyraean envoy was as well reasoned as convincing. No people, mindful of its own interests placed in the position of Athens could perhaps refuse admitting Corcyra into an alliance. Athens accepted Corcyra into her alliance and decided to send help, but her ships were reasonably cautious.

Athens convinced: Corcyra admitted into Athenian alliance

5/Corinthian Speech in the Athenian Assembly: The attempt of the Corinthian envoy who followed the Corcyraean, was to convince the Athenian Assembly of his malafides and to prevent Athens from admitting Corcyra into Athenian alliance. The argument of the Corinthian envoy was equally forceful although did not carry as much conviction as did the speech of the Corcyraean envoy. The Corinthian envoy gave a

Attempt of the Corinthian envoy to prevent alliance between Athens and Corcyra

point to point reply to the arguments of the Corcyraean envoy.

*Corcyraean
policy of
isolation
—one of
selfishness,
fraud and
outrage*

As to the point that Corcyra did not accept any previous offer of alliance in pursuance of a policy of moderation, the Corinthian envoy remarked that it was entirely for bad ends and they did not like any ally to know of their sinister motives. Further, Corcyraean geographical situation made them independent of others. They seldom visited other countries but they were constantly visited by vessels of foreign countries. This position of advantage made it possible to injure others with impunity. Their policy, as the Corinthian envoy emphasised, was not a specious one and 'not to avoid sharing in the crimes of others, but to secure monopoly of crime to themselves—the license of outrage wherever they can compel, of fraud wherever they can elude and enjoyment of their gains without shame'.

*Unfilial
conduct of
Corcyra
towards
Corinth*

The Corinthian envoy also complained that the attitude of Corcyra, their colony, had always been one of estrangement and of late one of hostility. If the Corcyraeans complained of ill-treatment, certainly must also remember that Corinth had not founded the colony for being insulted by it. While the relation between Corinth and her other colonies had been one of respect and love, Corcyra was an exception in that regard. In pride and license of wealth the Corcyraeans sinned again and again against Corinth and never more deeply than when Epidamnus was assisted by Corinth in her distress.

*The question
of arbitra-
tion came
only after
opening
hostilities*

As to the contention that Corcyra had offered to submit the question of arbitration, the fact remained, as the Corinthian envoy pointed out, that they had opened hostilities against Epidamnus and when they realised that Corinth would not tamely accept the situation that she proposed arbitration. Now that they stood in peril and were in enmity with Corinth that they came to share Athenian

protection. The Athenians should not admit them into alliance after they had wronged Corinth.

With regard to the clause of the *Thirty Years' Peace* that permitted any state which was not included among the allies of any side to choose any of the parties as friend, the Corinthian envoy asserted that the object of the clause was not to facilitate any state's joining any other in order to inflict injury to others. Corcyra's joining Athens would not bring peace for her but war and in the bargain Athens' involvement in it. There was a clear threat in the words of the Corinthian envoy: 'You cannot become their auxiliary and remain our friend, if you join in the attack you must share the punishment which the defenders inflict on them.' Athens, therefore, would do best, according to Corinthian envoy, to remain neutral or join Corinth against Corcyra. After all, there was a treaty between Athens and Corinth but there was none with Corcyra.

Threat of punishment

The Corinthian envoy even went to the extent of warning Athens that should she adopt the policy of assisting all offenders, her allies would go over to the Corinthian side and this policy would press more heavily on the Athenians than the Corinthians. For by encouraging defection Athens only show the way to her discontented subject allies to free themselves from Athenian yoke.

Athenian policy of admitting to her alliance the wrong-doer would press more heavily on Athens herself

The Corinthians, as the envoy said, had a claim on Athens' gratitude. For when Athens needed ships in her war against the Aeginetans Corinth assisted her with twenty vessels. When Samos revolted against Athens and sought Corinthian help she refused to render any assistance to her against Athens. Gratitude would demand Athens' assistance to be given to Corinth and in no event help to her enemy Corcyra.

Corinthian claims on Athens' gratitude

The Corinthian envoy concluded his speech by advising Athens not to be carried away by the arguments of the Corcyraeans and involve herself in a sure war, nor to be carried away by the prospect

*Corinthian
advice to
Athens*

of a naval alliance. For abstinence from injustice to other powers, is a basis of strength. Every power had a right to punish her own allies. Remembering her past help to Athens, she should stand by her in this crisis 'in which he who lends aid is most a friend and he who opposes is most a foe'.

*Indictment
of the
Spartans*

6/Corinthian Speech in the Lacedaemonian Congress: The Corinthian speech in the Lacedaemonian Congress was a clear indictment of Sparta and her policy. The Spartans had been accused of being sceptic about all complaints made by her allies and despite repeated complaints against Athens, Sparta remained complacent suspecting the complainants of some selfish motive. Corinth now had the greatest complaint to make namely 'of Athenian outrage and Lacedaemonian neglect'.

*Athenian
policy of
fraud and
expansion*

The Corinthian envoy dubbed Athens' acceptance of Corcyra into her alliance as *fraud* and her siege of Potidaea as an expansionist step. While Corcyra would have been of immense help by way of her contribution of a large navy which Peloponnesus had been deprived because she had been received as an ally by Athens, Potidaea would give her a most convenient place for action against the Thracian towns.

*Spartan
inaction
emboldened
Athens*

Sparta was held openly and squarely responsible for all this. For Sparta did not prevent fortification of Athenian city after the Persian War nor did she prevent the construction of Long Walls by Athens. The fault was not so much on the part of Athens as much of Sparta. For Sparta who claimed and aspired to be the liberator of the Hellas did not come forward to prevent Athens to have her own way, although she had the power to prevent it. Athens had been emboldened, as the Corinthian envoy pointed out, due to the inaction on the part Sparta, the leader of the Peloponnesian states. He then recounted the failure of Sparta to offer any resistance to the Persians, with any appreciable force; but Persia was a distant enemy whereas Athens

was an enemy near home and thus more dangerous. It was Athens that had wrecked the Persian enemy. If she had not yet annihilated the whole of Peloponnesus, it was not due to the Spartan protection but to Athens' blunder. The Corinthian envoy warned Sparta of not seeing the type of enemy she had in Athens.

*Athenian
blunder
rather than
Spartan
protection
that saved
Peloponnesus*

He then proceeded to offer a comparison between the Spartans and the Athenians. The Athenians, he pointed out, were addicted to innovation, were swift in conception and execution, the Spartans had a genius for remaining content with what they had and with no urge or capacity for innovation. When forced to act, they did not go far enough.

*Athenians
addicted to
innovation
Spartans
content with
what they
had, no
power of
innovation*

The Athenians were adventurous beyond their power, daring beyond their judgment. But the Spartans were in the habit of attempting less than what was in their power, not trusting their own judgment, and afraid of dangers. The Athenians were prompt whereas the Spartans were delatory and procrastinating. The Athenians would not be resting at home, the Spartans never away from it; the Athenians are out of home to extend their acquisitions, Spartans afraid of losing what they possessed when absent from home. The Athenians were swift to follow up success and slow to recoil from a reverse. They readily laid down their lives for their country's cause, lose no hope in defeat and are filled with fresh hopes. Their only idea of a holiday is to do what the occasion demands, they were born not to take rest. Such were the Athenians who were the antagonists of the Spartans.

*Athenians
adventurous,
daring and
quick—
Spartans
just the
reverse*

*Athenians
know no rest
—absent
from home
for further
acquisition:
Spartans
home
keeping*

The Spartans were not likely to succeed in their policy of not risking their future in preventing others from injuring them. This old fashioned policy, believing in no improvement would no longer succeed.

*Spartan
policy not
likely to
succeed*

The Corinthian envoy made a fervent appeal to the Spartans to end their policy of procrastination, to assist the Potidaeans and proceed on a speedy invasion of Attica, and not sacrifice friends and kindreds to the

*Appeal to
throw off
lethargy,
to assist
Potidaea, to
invade Attica*

enemy and drive the rest away from her own alliance, in despair. If Sparta would now act, the allies would stand by her. Let not Peloponnesian leadership which Sparta enjoyed from the day of their ancestors degenerate from the prestige it used to enjoy.

*Athenians
Envoys who
happened to
be in
Sparta took
the oppor-
tunity to speak*

7/Athenian Envoy's Speech at the Lacedaemonian Congress: The Athenian envoys who happened to be in Sparta on a different mission, listened to the Corinthian speech and took the opportunity to speak in defence of Athens. One of them spoke as follows:

*Not to argue
with Sparta's
allies but
to prevent
Sparta taking
a wrong
course*

He made it clear at the outset that it was none of his aims to argue with Sparta's allies or to combat their accusations, but to prevent Sparta from adopting a wrong course at the persuasion of her allies. He then dwelt on the Athenian service in the Persian Wars and the risks she had to take, the benefits of which were being shared by Sparta as well. Should Sparta decide on hostility with Athens, she would have to face a power that won the Battles of Marathon and Salamis. Athens by her victory had conferred as much benefits on herself as on Sparta.

*Benefits of
Athenian
success
against
Persia
equally
shared by
Sparta*

*An empire
by consent*

The Athenian Empire, the envoy emphasised was not acquired through violence, but because of a Spontaneous willingness on the part of those who were now within the Athenian Empire, to accept command. The envoy then justified retention of the Empire by Athens by saying that since Sparta looked upon Athens as an object of suspicion 'it appeared no longer safe to give up our empire', specially states as would leave Athenian empire would come under Sparta. Further, the justification of the empire also lay in the law that the weaker should be subject to the stronger. Moderation exercised by Athens would be best understood by placing oneself in the position of Athens. Athenian equity towards her subject allies had been wrongly condemned whereas it should have been approved. Athens' impartiality in law towards her subject allies had been again wrongly criticised. Other

imperial powers have not been condemned likewise. Further, where force is the deciding factor, there would be no need for law, but Athens believed in impartial treatment of the subject allies according to law. The Athenian subject allies enjoyed equality with Athens, but in the event of their defeat in a law court or any other adverse result made them forget the gratitude that they had been permitted to retain almost all of the possessions and rights. If Sparta were to succeed to the position of Athens she would also become unpopular in no time, with her subject allies.

*Treatment
of the subject
allies by
Athens*

The envoy, therefore, requested the Spartans to take more time to come to a correct decision and not to be persuaded by the complaints of others and to bring troubles to herself. Sparta must not break the Thirty Years' Peace with Athens and if there were differences, these should be settled by arbitration.

*Sparta
requested
not to break
Thirty
Years'
Peace*

9/Speech of Archidamus: King Archidamus in a wise, reasonable attitude looked upon the prospect of war. He told his hearers that he and all of his age were not without experience of some wars in their lifetime. Those who among his hearers were enthusiastic supporters of war were so because of the inexperience and an erroneous belief that war would bring advantage to them. The war which was being debated would be one of great magnitude, he warned. Athens, not within easy striking distance, and in high state of preparation, with immense wealth, both public and private, with a strong navy, cavalry, heavy-armed infantry, with a population whom no other Hellenic state could equal and above all, a number of tributary allies would not be an easy enemy to be defeated. Sparta had not sufficient number of ships, although she had superior land-forces. In financial strength Spartan inferiority was all the more pronounced. Even if Sparta would be in a position to spell devastation on Athenian lands, yet with their vast empire they would not suffer, for they might import whatever they would need:

*The war was
being sought
by some due
to want of
experience*

*The war was
likely to be
protracted*

*Inferiority
of Sparta
in sinners
of war*

*Inciting
rebellion
among the
Athenian
allies would
be ineffective
without naval
support*

Spartan hope of inciting rebellion among the subject allies of Athens would not be of much effect, for Sparta would not be able to support them with fleet, for most of them were islanders. Without being capable of beating the Athenians at sea or depriving them of their imperial revenue, it would not be possible to spell disaster on her. In the circumstances, the war was not likely to be ended quickly.

*Archidamus
suggested
preparations
for war and
development
of resources*

But King Archidamus would not, however, be so unfeeling as to allow Spartan allies to suffer at the hands of the Athenians or unwilling to unmask Athenian intrigues. But he advised that Sparta should remonstrate with the Athenians and in the mean time make preparations for war at a time most convenient to Sparta. Sparta should enlist support of allies, Greek or barbarian, as also develop her domestic resources. These done, Sparta might go to war with Athens should she fail to concede the Spartan demands. In no case should Sparta be hurried into a war with Athens on the complaints of her allies; war should not be got into to subserve sectional interests. It would be no cowardice to refrain from war. After all, war was not so much a matter of arms as of money.

*Delay for
preparation
was no
cowardice*

*Unwise to
go to war
without*

preparation

Spartan procrastination, although had been a butt of criticism by her own allies, should not be a matter for the Spartans to be ashamed of. For, to get into a war without necessary preparation would be only to delay its conclusion. 'We are both war like and wise, and it is our sense of order that makes us so.' When Spartan honour is involved, they should think calmly. Athens was prepared for arbitration and law forbade proceedings against a power that offered arbitration.

Archidamus discouraged instant war and advised necessary preparation before such a course should be adopted.

10/Speech of Nicias in the Athenian Assembly:
Nicias was not in favour of sending any expedition to Sicily and his arguments were precisely as follows:

Sending an expedition to Sicily was a matter of great consequence as such it needed anxious consideration and nothing should be done in a hurry being persuaded by foreigners.

Matter of great consequence—needed anxious consideration

Nicias knew well that he was arguing almost for a lost cause so he made it clear that what was the conviction of his conscience was being spoken out by him. He made no secret of his feeling that his words might be weak against the opinion of the members of the Assembly who were enthusiastic about sending the expedition, yet he thought it would be honest to speak out what his opinion was. He endeavoured to show that their enthusiasm was out of season and their ambition not easy of accomplishment.

He spoke of his own conviction

conscious of the contrary opinion's strength

Adverse effect of any miscarriage of the expedition would lead Sparta, although ostensibly at peace with Athens, to attack Athens. This was because the peace, then subsisting was not so honourable for Sparta as for Athens. Further many of the clauses of the peace treaty were still in dispute as many of the Spartan allies had not accepted them and were still in war with Athens.

Possible adverse effects of a defeat

An expedition to Sicily would naturally divide Athenian strength and this would encourage the Spartans to attack Athens more vigorously. The empire that Athens had already acquired was not yet completely secure. The Chalcidians were in revolt, while other subject allies gave Athens doubtful obedience. To go to the assistance of the Segestians who had been wronged, before subduing the rebels who had wronged Athens herself, would be an unwise step.

Division of Athenian strength would encourage enemy attack

Further, even if Sicily would be brought under Athens, its distance would preclude its being kept under control. On the other hand, in case of failure to take it would make the position Athens even worse than what it was at the moment. The Sicilians would in that case join the enemies of Athens.

In case of success it would be difficult to hold a distant Sicily under control

*Wisest
course
would be
to defend
Athens
against
Spartan
Machina-
tion*

Nicias suggested that the Athenians should not be puffed up by the misfortune of Sparta as was denoted by their signing of the peace with Athens, on the contrary Athens should find out how best she could break the spirit of the Spartans. The Athenian policy, therefore, should be defend herself against the oligarchical machinations of Sparta and not to defend Segesta.

*Alcibiades
criticised*

The respite that Athenians were now enjoying should be used for the benefit of the Athenian estates and persons rather than for the benefits of outsiders. Nicias, without mentioning the name of Alcibiades makes a fling at him by saying that any body who being overjoyed being chosen to command, urged the Assembly and if he were too young to command, the Athenians should not offer him any opportunity to enhance his personal splendour at his country's risk. As such a person was present in the Assembly (meaning Alcibiades) it should not be thought by others sitting near him that not to vote for war would be showing cowardice. The best course would be to ask the Segestans to fight out the issue with Selinus since they had begun the war without consulting Athens and for the Athenians to refrain from the mad dream of conquest of Sicily.

*Advice of
no war*

*A second
thought
and opinion
of the people
for a second
time
suggested*

The matter should be put to vote and not only this, the leaders should give a second thought to it and take the opinion of the Athenians for a second time. Although strictly speaking it would be contrary to law, still the importance of the affair would justify that.

*Alcibiades
asserts his
right to
command*

11/Alcibiades' Speech in Reply to that of Nicias: Alcibiades begins by replying to the attack on him by Nicias, saying that he had a better right to command than others and he was confident of his worth for it.

Alcibiades reminded his hearers, how he had run seven chariots in the Olympic games and won the first, second and the fourth prizes, bringing honour not only to himself but also to his country, and all this was

done at his own private cost. Surely some citizens had become envious at all this distinction to him. Alcibiades also reminded his hearers that he had compelled the Lacedaemonians to stake their all upon the issue in the Battle of Mantinea and although victorious in battle they had never recovered fully their confidence. Yet he was abused for all this. He asked, if there were any one who knew better management of public affairs. He asked the Athenians not to be afraid of his youth, nor to rescind the decision of sending an expedition to Sicily on the impression that it would be attacking a great power.

Alcibiades reminded his audience of his past exploits in support of his right to command

He then recounts the history of the nature of the people of Sicily, how they were without any patriotism, how they easily changed their institutions and adopted new ones. The people of Sicily who were motley rabbles, had no unanimity in counsel or concert in action. They had also not so many heavy infantry as they boasted of. It would also be to the advantage of the Athenians that the Syracusans were hated by many in Sicily and the latter would join Athens in attacking them.

Alcibiades recounted the character of the people in Sicily

The question of the Peloponnesians attacking Athens taking advantage of the division of strength did not arise, for the Peloponnesians could not hurt Athens with their navy and even though a naval expedition would be sent to Sicily one fleet would remain at home to meet any contingency.

No chance of Peloponnesians hurting Athens

The Athenians, Alcibiades emphasised, must not hold back, for there was no excuse for doing so and not going to the assistance of Athenian allies in Sicily. 'Certainly our alliance with Segesta was not for rendering us help in Greece, but for serving as a counterpoise to Athens' enemies in Sicily so that they might not come to the Hellas against her.' It would be the duty of Athens to go to their assistance.

Athenians should send help to Segesta

Alcibiades remarked that Athens must not be content with what she possessed, but must scheme to

Alcibiades

*sending of
the expedi-
tion and
rejection of
'do-nothing'
policy of
Nicias*

extend her empire. There was no limit to the expansion of empire. If the policy of expansion was abandoned, i.e. if the Athenians would cease to rule others, they would themselves be in danger of being ruled. He exhorted the Athenians to augment their power at home by their adventure abroad and thereby humble the pride of the Peloponnesians. The success was inevitable, for the Athenian navy was superior to all Sicilian ships put together. The Athenians, therefore, should not adopt the 'do-nothing' policy of Nicias, nor be swayed by the question of youth against old. After all young and the old by their united counsel had made Athens what she had become. The Athenians must live up to their character and institution and not change the same suddenly.

*Nicias'
attempt to
dissuade by
extravagance
of estimates*

12/Nicias' Second Speech in Defence of His Policy: Finding that the Athenians were bent on sending the expedition, Nicias arose again. This time he thought of dissuading them by the extravagance of his estimates for the success of the expedition.

*Extravagant
estimates
given by
Nicias for
the success of
the expedi-
tion*

He pointed out that despite the assistance Athens was expecting to get from Segesta and Leontini and others who might like Naxos and Catana would be coming to join Athenian forces, there were Selinus and Syracuse and five others who were powerfully prepared to face the Athenians. They had horsemen, archers, sufficient number of galleys and enough money including private wealth and deposits in temples. They had enough food for they grow enough corn. To succeed against such a power, Athens must not only have a sufficiently strong naval armament but also a heavy land army. In the event that all the Sicilian cities combined out of alarm at Athenian attack, Athenian should have horses to defend themselves. As retreat would be disgraceful, or to send back for reinforcements, the expedition must start with a competent force. In winter month, it would not be possible even to send a messenger to Athens. It would be, therefore, necessary to ensure additional supplies from friendly territories

near about. Nicias, therefore, suggested taking in the expedition a sufficiently superior navy, a large land army, archers, slingers, corn like wheat, parched barley, bakers, etc., with the expeditionary force. Should any one think differently about the estimates of Nicias he offered to resign his command to him.

13/Historical Value of the Speeches Introduced by Thucydides: Speeches take almost a fourth of Thucydides' work. This was done in his effort to apply objective method to the treatment of history which distinguished him from Herodotus, *Father of History* and all earlier writers. Thucydides' conception of history was so different from his predecessors and he was so much conscious of his role as a pioneer as a writer of history that he sacrificed interest to reality. He warns that the 'absence of romance in my history will, I fear, detract from its interest'. 'The birth of critical history was springing full-grown from the brain of Thucydides like Athena from the head of Zeus.' The spirit of scientific enquiry was wonderfully manifest in Thucydides' work. His austere respect for reality, his purely intellectual point of view gave his work the character which remains unrivalled even to the present times.

*Application
objective
method in
speeches*

*His austere
regard for
reality*

Thucydides believed that 'facts carry their own judgment and that 'after ascertaining them, the only art the historian needs is that of statement so precise and direct that facts alone convey the full content of their inner significance'. He was also confident of his ability to ascertain objective facts and to present them objectively. Yet the element of subjectivity was not entirely absent in his treatment. 'This element Thucydides concealed by his dramatic treatment, and the work of science he planned became rather a work of art.' The influence of contemporary drama on him showed itself in the technical construction of his work.

*His views
about facts*

*Subjectivity
not entirely
absent in
speeches*

He introduced speeches to limit self-projection. But his own views crept into them, although the extent

*Speeches
introduced
to limit*

*self-projection—
partially
fulfilled*

*Historical
value of
speeches
assessed*

*His
difficulties*

*Presumption
in his favour*

*Cambridge
historians'*

*Historical
objectivity
impaired
partially*

*Instance of
Pericles*

*Speeches if not
models of
historical
objectivity
—Certainly
works of art*

of this subjective element remained concealed in the dramatic representation of the speeches.

The question naturally arises as to the extent of historical value of such speeches. It must be borne in mind that Thucydides was a pioneer in the field of truly historical composition. The extent to which he could make use of documentary evidences was relatively small. But when compared with the official documents like treaties, etc. Thucydides has been found fully authentic. This will naturally raise presumption in his favour that his speeches, although reflecting the pathos, irony of the situations were inherently present in them.. The Cambridge historian, however, remarks that 'Thucydides puts into the mouths of various orators, no doubt with due regard to probabilities of the case, but seldom quite convincingly from the historical point of view.' In military details, however, the Cambridge historian concedes that Thucydides was the master of all those who wrote histories of their own times.

Despite his best efforts, Thucydides' own views must have crept into the speeches which he produced in a direct narration to limit self-projection to the minimum. The self-projection was concealed in the dramatic art indeed, but historical objectivity was impaired to the extent of self-projection. For instance, the speeches of Pericles were much more refined and effective, although factually Pericles was never so polished an orator. Here Thucydides' respect for Pericles projected itself in the speeches put into his mouth. Yet it is difficult to find anything arbitrary, or speculative in his work, his was a calm, lucid and impartial mind actuated only by love of absolute truth. The speeches if contained some amount of self-projection, these brought out the basic facts of the situations. If the speeches were not models of historical objectivity, these were indeed superb works of art.

The End

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Index

A

Abydos, 5, 15, 45, 70
 Acanthus, 5, 234, 238, 243
 Acarnian, 132, 196
 Achaea, 4, 132, 139, 160, 164, 220, 252
 Achaemendis, family of, 9
 Achaemenos, 54
 Aeolian, 4-6, 8, 15, 74, 97, 100, 104, 139, 147, 167, 185, 188
 Aegean Sea, 1, 26, 29
 Aegina, 29, 47, 56, 70, 71, 82, 83, 127-129, 131, 132, 160, 178, 214
 Aeginetans, 56, 60
 Aegospotami, 307
 Acolians, 1, 5, 8, 11, 22
 Aeschylus, 87, 313
 Agamemnon, 3
 Agis, 216, 254, 255, 298
 Alcmaeonids, 117
 Alcibiades, 138, 151, 167, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 256, 257, 258, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 272, 273, 287, 294, 305
 Alcidas, 204, 206, 208
 Alexander of Macedon, 68, 76, 106, 129
 Amompharetus, 66, 67
 Amphictyonic, 79, 80
 Amphipolis, 5, 225, 234, 235, 237, 238, 240, 243, 244, 249, 251, 259, 283
 Amyntos, 17
 Anactorion, 165
 Anaxagoras, 137, 138, 156
 Antyphon, 281
 Apollo, of, Branchidae, 24
 —of Delphi, 5, 9
 —of Didyusa, 23, 24
 —temple of, 90
 Arcadia, 4, 80, 249, 254, 255
 Archidamian War, 172-248
 Archidamus, 163, 168, 169, 177, 178, 196, 202, 216
 Areophagus, 111, 113, 120, 122, 123, 199
 Arginusae, 307
 Argos, 136, 157, 159, 164, 236, 241, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 265
 Aristides, 41, 49, 225, 231, 238
 Aristophanes, 142, 154, 155, 166, 216, 226, 227, 228
 Aristotle, 310
 Artabazus, 61, 66, 68
 Artaphernes, 17, 22, 26-29, 44
 Artaxerxes, 84, 128
 Artemesium, 44, 51, 55-56, 75, 83

Aspasia, 155

Attica, 2, 5, 30, 130, 164, 173, 176, 178, 186, 189, 196, 202, 204, 214, 216, 224, 231, 236, 247

B

Barbarians, 1, 2, 53
 Bellerophon, 3
 Bocotia, 5, 47, 50, 54, 62, 63, 118, 119, 129-133, 135, 158, 160, 165, 166, 177, 214, 231, 232, 240, 242, 249, 250, 252, 254
 Bogen of Eion, 94, 104
 Boule, 116, 122
 Brasidas, 195, 218, 225, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 241-246
 Byzantium, 5, 21, 23, 77, 87, 88, 93, 103-104, 143, 294, 312

C

Callias, 103, 134
 Callimachus, 38, 41, 42
 Cappadocia, 7, 9, 46
 Caria, 8, 57, 46, 105, 204, 206
 Carystus, 30, 94, 95, 98, 104
 Chalcedon, 5
 Chalcidice, 175, 237
 Chersonese, 25, 30, 39, 70, 103
 Chios, 5, 22, 24, 99, 143, 167, 202
 Cimon, 70, 77, 86-88, 94, 97-99, 102-109, 119, 127, 130, 131, 137, 144, 240, 246
 Cimmerians, 6-8
 Cleisthenes, 115-117
 Cleon, 192, 205, 212, 213, 220, 222, 223, 225-231, 234, 236, 237, 242, 244, 246, 248, 251
 Cleomenes, 20, 21, 118
 Cnemus, 193, 194, 196
 Corcyra, 5, 48, 49, 84, 146, 147, 148, 154, 160, 161, 162, 163, 165, 167, 194, 216, 217, 264
 Corcyra, Revolt of, 208-211
 Corinth, 49, 67, 70, 127-129, 143, 145, 147, 148, 149, 152, 153, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 167, 173, 194, 196, 208, 210, 232, 242, 249, 252, 253
 Corona, 135, 198, 232, 233
 Council of Five Hundred, 116, 130
 Croesus, 8-12
 Cyclades, 17, 27, 30, 95
 Cyprus, 88, 96, 105, 109

Cyrus, the Great, 9, 11-13, 298
Cythera, 223, 231, 235, 236, 240
Cyzicus, 292, 293

D

Darius, 13-17, 22, 25, 27, 29, 36
Delos, island of, 30, 68, 90
—confederacy of, 69, 86, 87, 88-109.
129, 198
Demagogues, Rise of, 246-248
Demosthenes, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218,
221, 229, 230, 231, 232, 269, 270, 271.
272, 285
Diodorus, 59, 69, 94, 96, 154, 165
Dorians, 1, 4, 5, 67, 213

E

Ecclesia, 112, 113, 116, 121, 122, 125
Empire, Assyrian, 6-8, 10
Epidamnus, 5, 146, 147, 161
Ephiatters, 52, 106, 107, 108, 119-120.
122, 124, 125
Eretria, 281
Euboea, 17, 30, 51, 144, 178
—island of, 95, 135
Eurybiades, 49, 55-57
Eurymedon, 76, 96, 105, 119, 213, 216,
217, 219, 247, 269, 270, 273, 285, 286
Euxine, 2, 5, 78, 87, 94

G

Gorgias, 320
Gylippus, 284, 309

H

Halicarnassus, 5, 57
Halys, 7-9
Heliaca, 113, 122, 124
Hellenotamiae, 92, 98
Hellepont, 21, 44-46, 49, 60, 61, 68, 70.
94, 104
Hermes, 273
Herodotus, 14, 15, 18, 23, 29, 31, 45-47,
57, 65, 85, 88, 94, 115
Hippias, 20, 29-31, 35, 36, 39-41, 117,
320
Histiaeus, 15-17, 22, 19
Hyperbolus, 284, 289

I

Ictinus, 142
Imbros, 25, 30, 40, 144
Ionia, 11-13, 19, 26, 60, 69, 141
Ionian Revolt, 13, 17-26, 29, 30
Ionians, 1, 4, 7, 11, 47, 213
Isagoras, 117, 118, 211

J

Jason, 3

L

Laches, 211, 212, 214, 234, 258
Laconia, 4, 106, 177, 216, 241, 259
Lamachus, 262, 264, 265, 266, 267, 272.
273
Lemnos, 30, 40, 144
Leonidas, 51
Leontini, 143, 211
Leotychides, 79
Leshos, 24, 99, 143, 150, 151, 202
Leucas, 215, 216
Locris, 54, 131, 132, 162, 166, 213
Long walls, 130
—wall, 142
Lycophon, 194
Lysander, 151, 299, 305

M

Macedonia, 14, 15, 26, 29, 106
Mantineia, 80, 249-251, 254-256
Marathon, 30, 31, 34-39, 95, 96, 105, 176
Mardonius, 28, 60-68, 76, 83
Megabazus, 15, 16, 17, 28, 134
Megara, 5, 56, 83, 127-129, 131, 132,
135, 136, 139, 149, 160, 162, 165, 167,
173, 176, 178, 196, 200, 231, 232, 242,
252
Megarid, 128, 130, 133
Melos, 5, 100, 214, 260
Messana, 5, 212, 264, 265
Methone, 178, 223, 231, 241
Methymna, 5, 202, 203, 205
Miletus, 5, 11, 16-18, 20, 21, 23-25,
150, 295
Miltiades, 15, 16, 25, 30, 33, 39-43, 70,
124, 246
Mindarus, 296
Mycale, 68-71, 72, 73, 75, 76, 105, 137
Mytilene, 5, 175, 204-207, 229
—Revolt of, 202-207

N

Nanpactus, 127, 132, 136, 165, 194, 195,
208, 214, 215, 232
Naxos, 5, 17, 20, 30, 95, 264
Neocles, 81
—revolt of, 94, 97-99
Nicias, 193, 213, 214, 221, 223, 230, 234-
238, 240, 246, 250, 251-253, 256, 257,
259, 262, 264-266, 268-272, 273, 276,
282, 288
—peace of, 225, 236-241, 249, 250
Nisaea, 127, 136, 220, 231, 232, 239, 242

O

Odyssey, The, 2, 3
 Olynthus, 5, 60, 233, 238
 Orchomenus, 134, 135, 254

P

Paches, 204
 Pausanias, 64-67, 76-79, 84, 88, 89, 93, 103, 104
 Peloponnesian War, 99, 100, 146-176, 211, 214
 Perdiccas, 195, 196, 233-235, 256, 269
 Pericles, 106, 124, 135, 149, 154-158, 160, 167-170, 171, 172, 174-176, 177, 178, 179, 181-185, 189-193, 197-201, 225, 226, 228, 229, 246
 Pharnabazus, 296
 — Athens under, 126-145
 Phocis, 47, 54, 131-133, 135, 165, 166
 Piraeus, 47, 32, 86, 165, 186, 189, 241, 299, 303
 Plague, the, 186-189, 193, 196, 206, 213
 Plato, 124, 197, 226
 Platea, 44, 46, 61-68, 102, 118, 154, 159, 165, 177, 196, 206, 240
 Pleistoanax, 135, 234, 237, 238
 Plutarch, 87, 96, 102, 154, 156, 197, 200
 Polemarch, 31, 41, 42, 110, 111
 Potidaea, 5, 148, 155, 162, 163, 169, 175, 189, 193-195, 200, 201, 205, 207, 235
 Probuli, 278
 Propontis, shore, of, 6, 12, 13, 15, 23
 Pylos, 217-219, 231, 235, 236, 240, 242, 250, 251
 — & Sphacteria, 216-225, 229

R

Rhegium, 5, 143, 211, 212, 264

S

Salamis, 44, 56-61, 68, 73, 84, 86, 87, 88, 93, 95, 96, 102, 105, 120, 133
 Samos, 24, 69, 70, 143, 150, 202, 203
 Sardis, 7, 9, 11-14, 17, 21, 22, 25-27, 45, 48, 69, 150
 Scione, 235, 236
 Scythia, 15, 16, 36, 40
 Segesta, 212, 272
 Segesta and Selinus, affairs of, 261-266
 Sestos, 45, 70, 75, 103,
 Sicily, 5, 143, 148, 161, 167, 193, 211, 212, 213, 214, 216, 259, 262, 264, 265, 267, 268, 272

Sicily, Athenian intervention in, 211-216,
 Sitacles, 193, 195, 233
 Socrates, 311
 Solon, 111-113, 115, 116, 123
 Sophists, 317
 Sophocles, 174, 210, 216, 217, 218, 219, 247
 Sphacteria, 117, 118, 174, 219, 237, 245
 Sthenelaidas, 152, 153
 Strymon, 15, 16, 45, 93, 94, 104, 105
 Susa, 12, 14, 19, 22, 60
 Sybota, 148, 162
 Syracuse, 5, 143, 211, 213, 261, 264, 265, 266
 — siege of the city of, 266-270, 285

T

Tanagra, 108, 130, 131, 133
 Tegea, 254, 255
 Thasos, 5, 46, 97, 98, 105, 106, 243
 Thebes, 64, 67, 129, 131, 158, 196, 240, 249
 Themistocles, 49, 51, 56-58, 60, 72, 75, 76, 80, 81-85, 87, 92, 93, 95, 102, 137, 199
 Theramenes, 279, 281, 293, 299
 Thermopylae, 44, 50, 51-55, 73, 75, 77, 224
 Thessaly, 46, 47, 50, 61, 79, 80, 108, 127, 233
 Thrace, 14, 15, 17, 26, 29, 94, 104, 105, 193, 230, 232, 233, 234, 235, 242, 259
 Thucydides, 96, 108, 121, 140, 144, 146-148, 151, 157, 164, 165, 178, 186, 195, 199, 201, 205, 209, 222, 224, 226, 227, 229, 230, 234, 245, 263, 266, 270
 Tissaphernes, 277, 279, 294, 296
 Torone, 244
 Troezen, 55, 136, 139, 220
 Truce, Five Years', 109, 133, 135, 136
 Truce, Five Years', 109, 133, 135, 136
 — Thirty Years', 147, 148, 153, 236
 — One Year's, 235, 236
 Thrasybulus, 291
 Thrasyllus, 291

W

War Trojan, 3

Zacynthus, 5, 165, 193, 194, 218
 Zeno, 138

